

COLLECTION.

Of several Remarkable and Valuable

SERMONS,

Speeches and Exhortations,

At Renewing and Subscribing the

NATIONAL COVENANT OF SCOTLAND:

And at Entering into and Subscribing the

SOLEMN LEAGUE AND COVENANT

OF THE THREE KINGDOMS OF

SCOTLAND, ENGLAND AND IRELAND.

WHEREIN

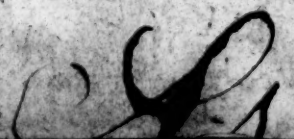
The nature, necessity and excellency of the duty of
Covenanting, with the evil and danger of Apostacy,
are clearly and convincingly held forth from the Word
of God.

By several Reverend, Learned and Pious DIVINES
of that Period.

GLASGOW:

PRINTED BY NAPIER AND KHULL,
FOR HUGH MONCRIEFF, THE PUBLISHER.

1799.





T H E

P R E F A C E.

READER,

THE Authors of the following Sermons were great men, renowned in their day for their learning, piety, and zeal for our reformation and covenants. And seeing they were among the main actors of that glorious work, and understood the spring and management thereof; their sermons and discourses upon that subject cannot miss to cast great light upon it, to us in this generation, who are so far departed from that covenanted reformation, which they with so much zeal promoted and advanced. For this reason I judge the publication of the following sermons seasonable. That the Lord may make them serviceable through

his blessing, to 'turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and of the children to their fathers, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord,' is the prayer of

Thy Servant for

Jesus sake,

STIRLING, }
May 25th, 1741. }

EBENEZER ERSKINE.

THE

Reasons for the Publication.

That the Reader may have some general knowledge of the design and tendency of this collection, the publisher has thought it necessary to prefix the reasons for the publication, formerly printed in the proposals, which he presumes may give the attentive reader some more light and knowledge of their character and design, and will let him see at the same time how useful and necessary they are for these times.

I. **T**HESE sermons, speeches and exhortations, hold forth the nature and duty of personal and national covenanting for reformation and defence of religion, and prove from the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, the lawfulness of such covenanting, as also, the great danger of covenant-refusing and covenant-breaking; with full answers to all objections that have been made against the covenants.

II. They shew the true principles of covenanters and covenanted-reformation, and the great and commendable zeal and activity

of our much honoured and worthy reformers, for the covenanted cause and interest of Christ, and glorious work of reformation then carried on and happily established in the churches of Christ in Scotland, England and Ireland, in prosecution of the blessed ends of these solemn and sacred covenants with God, which had the public authority and approbation of the church, and were ratified and confirmed by the parliaments of both kingdoms, having been solemnly sworn and subscribed by persons of all ranks oftener than once.

III. They are a very great vindication of our worthy reformers, the covenants, and work of reformation, from the malicious and groundless aspersions both of pretended friends and public adversaries; and very useful and profitable to all, who desire to know and retain the ancient, received, established and sworn-to principles of our covenanted reformation, in the sometimes famous and reforming churches of Christ in the three kingdoms, as the same were then received, professed and happily established by the laws of this kingdom agreeable to the word of God.

IV. They are a great testimony to the covenants and work of reformation, and may be of use to humble all ranks under a sense of our miserable backsliding, defection and apostasy from the covenants of our God; and a mean, through the Lord's blessing, to clear the way, and prepare both mi-

nisters and people of all ranks, for following the footsteps and laudable example of our worthy reformers, to return unto the covenanted God of our fathers, by seriously setting about the solemn renovation of our covenants, with accommodation to the times, and suitable acknowledgment of sins and engagement to duties, after near a hundred years defection from the same; as was done by our worthy and zealous reformers, *annis* 1638, and 1648. Which was attended with more than ordinary manifestations of the presence of God, and influences of his Spirit in the assemblies of his people; and was in effect to this church as life from the dead, as to the reviving and restoring the work of reformation, and putting a stop to the defection.

V. They prove, that covenanting is an ordinance of God, and a part of divine worship, having the stamp and impression of divine authority upon it. They hold forth the solemnity, grounds, properties and benefits of a sacred covenant together with the duties of such as enter into the same; and discover the quarrel of covenant-violation, and the necessity of renewing covenant for pacification thereof. They contain also instructions and rules for right covenanting, and clearly prove the perpetual obligation of the covenants: Likewise several weighty cases of conscience relating to covenanting are succinctly, solidly and satisfying handled and resolved.

VI. It is a long time since these sermons, speeches and exhortations were out of print; and they are now so very rare, that they have been sold at double price, and are yet wanting by almost all the lovers and well-wishers to a covenanted work of reformation, and not now to be purchased at any expence; and it is a great pity that such a treasure of gospel-light and zeal for truth should be buried in darkness: therefore it is expected, that it will be no unacceptable service to the public, to send them abroad in one body.

We shall conclude the whole, with the dying words of the famous Mr. Guthry to the people, when he was upon the scaffold. After the cloth was upon his face, he slipped it up again, and with a loud voice cried to the people, The covenants, the covenants shall be Scotland's reviving.

N. B. The several Acts of the General Assembly of the church of Scotland, and Acts of Parliament of this ancient kingdom, approving ratifying and establishing the covenants, would have been printed with this collection, but the same is already printed along with the covenants in the Confession of Faith, &c. printed 1725. and re-printed 1739. We were also designed to have added at the end of this collection the testimonies of some of our covenanting ancestors for these covenants, but as the same are already collected in a late book, entitled, A Review, &c. printed 1727,

written in vindication of them, we shall without putting our readers to any farther trouble, recommend them to it; as also to Mr. Zechariah Crofton, in his fastening of St. Peter's fetters, printed 1660, page 146. where in twelve or fourteen counties of England, he produces no less than 793 ministers, most of whom he asserts were then alive, who did under their hands testify their approbation of, and adherence unto the Solemn League and Covenant.

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A
COLLECTION
Of several Remarkable and Valuable
SERMONS,
Speeches and Exhortations,
AT THE
TAKING, RENEWING AND SUBSCRIBING
THE
COVENANTS.

*An Exhortation from the Reverend Ministers
of the Gospel, met at Edinburgh in February,
1638, at renewing the National Covenant,
sent to every one of the Lords of Council se-
verally, inviting them to subscribe the same.*

May it please your Lordship,
WE the ministers of the gospel, con-
vened at this so necessary a time, do
find ourselves bound to represent, as unto
all, so in special unto your lordship what
comfortable experience we have of the won-
derful favour of God, upon the renewing
Numb. I. B

of the Cōfession of Faith and Covenant; what peace and comfort hath filled the hearts of all God's people; what resolutions and beginnings of reformation of manners are sensible perceived in all parts of the kingdom, above any measure that ever we did find, or could have expected; how great glory the Lord hath received hereby, and what confidence we have (if this sun-shine be not eclipsed by some sinful division or defection) that God shall make this a blessed kingdom, to the contentment of the king's majesty, and joy of all his good subjects, according as God hath promised in his good word, and performed to his people in former times: and therefore we are forced, from our hearts, both to wish and entreat your lordship to be partaker and promover of this joy and happiness by your subscription, when your lordship shall think it convenient; and in the mean time, that your lordship would not be sparing to give a free testimony to the truth, as a timely and necessary expression of your tender affection to the cause of Christ, now calling for help at your hands. Your lordship's profession of the true religion, as it was reformed in this land; the national oath of this kingdom, sundry times sworn and subscribed, obliging us who live at this time; the duty of a good patriot, the office and trust of a privy councilor, the present employment, to have place amongst those that are first acquainted with his majesty's pleasure; the consideration that this is the time

of trial of your lordship's affection to religion, the respect which your lordship hath unto your fame, both now and hereafter, when things shall be recorded to posterity; and the remembrance, that not only the eyes of men and angels are upon your lordship's carriage, but also that the Lord Jesus is a secret witness now to observe, and shall be an open judge hereafter, to reward and confess every man before his Father, that confesseth him before men: all of these, and each of them, beside your lordship's personal and particular obligations to God, do call for no less at your lordship's hands, in the case of so great and singular necessity: and we also do expect so much at this time, according as your lordship at the hour of death would be free of the terror of God, and be refreshed with the comfortable remembrance of a word spoken in season for Christ Jesus, King of kings, and Lord of lords.

*A Discourse and Exhortation at the renewing
of the National Covenant at Inverness, April
25th, 1638.*

BY MR. ANDREW CANT.

LONG ago our gracious God was pleased to visit this nation with the light of his glorious gospel, by planting a vineyard in, and making his glory to arise upon Scotland. A wonder! that so great a God should shine on so base a soil! Nature hath been a step-mother to us in comparison of those who live under a hotter climate, as in a land like Goshen, or a garden like Eden. But the Lord looks not as man: his grace is most free, whereby it often pleaseth him to compensate what is wanting in nature: whence upon Scotland (a dark obscure island, inferior to many) the Lord did arise, and discovered the tops of the mountains with such a clear light, that in God's gracious dispensation, it is inferior to none. How far other nations outstripped her in naturals, as far did she out-go them in spirituals, Her pomp less, her purity more: they had more of antichrist than she, she more of Christ than they: in their

reformation something of the beast was reserved; in ours, not so much as a hoof. When the Lord's ark was set up among them, Dagon fell, and his neck brake, yet his stump was left; but with us, stump and all was cast into the brook Kidron. Hence king James his doxology in face of parliament, thanking God who made him king in such a kirk that was far beyond England (they having but an ill said mass in English) yea, beyond Geneva itself; for holy-days (one of the beast's marks) are in part there retained, which (said he) to day are with us quite abolished. Thus to a people sitting in darkness, and in the shadow of death, light is sprung up. Thus, in a manner, the stone that the builders refused is become the head of the corner. The Lord's anointed (to whom the ends of the earth were given for a possession and inheritance) came and took up house amongst us, strongly established on two pillars, Jachin and Boaz, and well ordered with the staves of beauty and bands, and borrowing nothing from the border of Rome. Her foundation, walls, doors and windows were all adorned with carbuncles, sapphires, emeralds, chrysolites and precious stones out of the Lord's own treasure: God himself sat with his beauty and ornaments therein, so that it was the praise and admiration of the whole earth. Strangers and home-bred persons wondered. Such was the glory, perfection, order and unity of this house, that the altar of Damascus could have no peace, the Canaanite no rest,

heresy no hatching, schism no footing, Diotrophes no incoming, the papists no couching, and Jezebel no fairing. Our church looked forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners. Then God's tabernacle was amiable, his glory filled the sanctuary, the clear fresh streams watered the city of our God; the stoutest humbled themselves, and were afraid. If an idiot entered the Lord's courts, so great power sounded from Barnabas and Boanerges, the sons of consolation and thunder, that they were forced to fall down on their face, and cry, 'This is Bethel, God is here.'

But alas! Satan envied our happiness, brake our ranks, poisoned our fountains, mudded and defiled our streams; and while the watchmen slept, the wicked one sowed his tares: whence these divers years by-gone, for ministerial authority, we had lordly supremacy and pomp; for beauty, fairing; for simplicity, whorish buskings; for sincerity, mixtures; for zeal, a Laodicean temper; for doctrines, mens precepts; for wholesome fruits, a medley of rites; for feeders, we had fleecers; for pastors, wolves and impostors; for builders of Jerusalem, rebuilders of Jericho; for unity, rents; for progress, defection. Truth is fallen in the streets, our dignity is gone, our credit lost, our crown is fallen from our heads; our reputation is turned to imputation: before God and man we justly deserve the censure of the degenerate vine; a backsliding people, an apostata.

perjured nation, by our breaking a blessed covenant so solemnly sworn.

Yet, behold! when this should have been our doom, when all was almost gone, when we were done the hill, when the pit's mouth was opened, and we were at the falling in, and at the very shaking hands with Rome; the Lord, strong and gracious pitied us, looked on us, and cried, saying, 'Return, return, ye backsliding people; come, and I will heal your backslidings.' The Lord hath been so saving, and the cry so quickening, that almost all of ranks, from all quarters and corners are awakened and on foot, meeting and answering the Lord, saying, 'Behold we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God, other lords besides thee have had dominion over us, but by thee only will we make mention of thy name.' All are wondering at the turn, and looking like them that dream, and are singing and saying, 'Blessed be the Lord who hath not given us for a prey to their teeth; our souls are escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowler, the snare is broken, and we are escaped: our help is in the name of the Lord who made the heaven and the earth.' Who thought to have seen such a sudden change in Scotland, when all second causes were posting a contrary course? when proud men were boasting and saying, 'Bow down that we may go over;' and we laid our bodies as the ground, and as the streets to them that went over. But now, behold

one of God's wonders! So many of all ranks taking the honour and cause of Christ to heart; all unanimously, harmoniously and legally conjoined as one man in supplications, protestations and declarations against innovations and innovators, corruptions and corrupters. Behold and wonder! That old covenant (once and again solemnly sworn and perfidiously violated is now again happily renewed, with such solemnity, harmony, oaths and subscriptions, that I dare say, this hath been more real and true in thee, O Scotland, these few weeks by-gone, than for the space of thirty years before. I know Pastors that went to smite Jeremiahs, are become at this work Magor-missabib, terror round about; Zedekiahs that went to smite Micajah, seek now an inner chamber to hide themselves. Tobia and Sanballat gnaw their tongues, laugh and despise us, saying, 'What is this ye do? Will ye rebel against the king? Will ye fortify yourselves? Will ye make an end in a day? Will ye remove the stones out of the heaps of rubbish that is burnt?' Rehum the chancellor, Shimshai the scribe, and the rest of their companions, cease not to fill the ears of a gracious prince with prejudice, saying, 'Be it known to thee, O king, if this city be built, and the walls thereof set up again, that they will not pay toll, tribute or custom.' But to these we answer, 'Let the king live, and let all his enemies be confounded, let all that seek his damnation be put to shame

‘ here and henceforth: but as for you, ye
‘ are strangers, meddle not with the joy of
‘ God’s people; ye have no portion, right
‘ nor memory in God’s Jerusalem.’ If the
begun work vex them, it is no wonder; it
does prognosticate the ruin of their king-
dom, and that Haman, who hath begun to
fall before the seed of the Jews, shall fall
totally: the Lord is about to prune his vine-
yard, and to drive out the foxes that eat the
tender grapes; to pluck up bastard plants,
and to whip buyers and sellers out of the
temple. The Lord is about to strike the
Gehazies with leprosy, and to bring low the
Simon Magues who were so high lifted up
by Satan’s ministry. The Lord is calling the
great ones to put too their shoulder, and help
his work; he hath been in the south, saying,
‘ keep not back,’ and blessed be God, they
have not: he hath now sent to the north,
saying, ‘ Give up, bring my sons from afar,
‘ and my daughters from the ends of the
‘ earth:’ contend for the faith once deliver-
ed to Scotland. There is but one Lord, one
faith, one cause that concerns all. Though
this north climate be cold; I hope your hearts
are not, at least they should not be cold. The
earth is the Lord’s and its fulness, the world
and they that dwell therein; the uttermost
parts of the earth are given to Christ for a
possession; his dominion is from sea to sea,
and from the river to the ends of the earth.
Come then, and kiss the Son; count it your
greatest honour to honour Christ, and to

lend his fallen truths a lift; come and help to build the old wastes, that ye may be called the repairers of the breach; and then shall all generations call you blessed; then shall God build up your houses, as he did to the Egyptian midwives, for their fearing God, and for their friendship to his people Israel. Be not like the nobles of Tekoa, of whom Nehemiah complained, that they would not put their necks to the work of the Lord. Be not like Meroz, whom the angel of the Lord cursed bitterly, for not coming to the help of the Lord against the mighty. Neither be ye like these mockers and scorers, at the renewing of the Lord's covenant in Hezekiah's days, but rather like those whose hearts the Lord humbled and moved. Be not like those invited to the king's supper, who refused to come, and had miserable excuses, and therefore should not taste of it. We hope better things of you; God hath reserved and advanced you for a better time and use: but if ye draw back, keep silence, and hold your peace, God shall bring deliverance and enlargement to his church another way; but God save you from the sequel. Nothing is craved of you but what is for God and the king; for Christ's honour, and the kirk's good, and the kingdom's peace: God give to your hearts courage, wisdom and resolution for God and the king, and for Christ and his truths.
Amen.

A
S E R M O N

Preached at the Renovation of the

NATIONAL COVENANT,

And Celebration of the

LORD'S SUPPER,

AT GLASGOW, ANNO, 1638.

ON MATTH. XXii. 2—6.

By the Reverend Mr. ANDREW CANT, sometime
Minister of the Gospel at Aberdeen.

JOSH. XXIV. 27. *So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and set them a statute, and an ordinance in Shechem.*

2 KINGS XI. 17. *And Jehoiada made a covenant between the Lord, and the king and the people, that they should be the Lord's people: between the king also and the people.*

ISA. XLIV. 5. *One shall say, I am the Lord's: and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob: and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel.*


GLASGOW:

PRINTED BY NAPIER AND KHULL,
FOR HUGH MONCRIEFF, THE PUBLISHER.

1799.

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A Sermon preached after the renovation of the National Covenant, and celebration of the Lord's supper, 1638.

MATTH. xxii. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. *The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, who made a marriage for his son: and he sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding; and they would not come, &c.*

I Purpose not to handle this parable punctually, because it stands not with the nature of a parable, neither will the time suffer me so to do.

The parable runs upon an evident declaration and clear manifestation of God's sweetest mercies, in offering the marriage of his Son, his own Son, his well-beloved Son, the Son of his love, the Son of his bosom, the Son as good as the Father, the Son as great and as glorious as the Father, the Son whose generation none can declare. The Father offers this his Son in marriage: 1. To the Jews, as you have in the first seven verses of the parable. 2. To the Gentiles, in the rest of the parable.

1. To the Jews, not because of their worthiness; 'But even so, O Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.' This offer was the effect of no merit, neither of congruity nor of condignity in the Jews; for they were like that wretched and monstrous infant,

Numb. I.

C

Ezek. xvi. 3, 4. unswaddled, unwashten, uncleanfed, 'lying in its blood, its navel not cut, nor salted at all, nor swaddled at all, 'cast out in the open field, having no eye to 'pity it.'

2. As for the Gentiles, ye may see what case they were in, if ye read this same parable, Luke xiv. 20. 'Go ye out into the streets 'and lanes of the city, and call the poor, the 'lame, blind and maimed,' &c. Some were cripple, some poor and blind, and withered, and miserable, and naked, and leper, &c. unworthy to come to our Lord's gates, let be to have them opened wide to us; unworthy to be set down at his table, let be to be admitted to his royal marriage feast, and to get Christ our Lord to be our match, and to be the food and cheer of our souls: and therefore let all souls, let all pulpits, let all schools, let all universities, let all men, let all women, let all Christians cry, grace, grace, grace, praise, praise, praise, blessing, blessing, for evermore to be the Lord's free grace. Fy, fy, upon the man; fy, fy, upon the woman, that is an enemy to the Lord's free grace. The fullest, and the fairest, and the freest thing in heaven or earth is the free grace of God to our poor souls: Psalm cxv. 1, 'Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto 'thy name be all the glory.'

At another occasion I handled the parable after a more general manner, and propounded these points unto you: 1. Who was this great king? 2. Who was the Son of this great king?

1. This great king is God himself, 'the King of kings, and Lord of lords.' Then for the Lord's sake, stand in awe of him, love him and fear him. And I charge you all here before that great and dreadful Lord, that ye humble yourselves under his mighty hand, and that ye prostrate and submit yourselves under his almighty hand, and come away as ye promised. Kiss the Son, and embrace him, and then shall wrath be holden off you; and a shower of God's mercy shall come down upon you; Then the king is God.

2. The King's son is Christ. Then there follows a dinner, 'I have prepared my dinner.' Yea, I have a supper also, for Luke says, he 'prepared a great supper.' I told you in what respects it is great. 1. I told you it was great in respect of the author of it, God. 2. I told you it was great in respect of the matter of it. Ye know the matter of it, as holy scripture tells. Whiles it gets base, silly, simple names, and is delineated, and expressed under common terms: but the most common term it gets is so considerable that our case would not be good if it were wanting. Whiles 'tis called 'a feast of fat things full of marrow, of wine on the lees well refined,' Isa. xxv. 6. Whiles it is called 'gold;' Rev. iii. 18. Whiles it is called 'fatlings, and a fatted and fed calf,' Luke xv. 23. Whiles 'honey and milk,' Isa. lv. 1. Whiles it is called 'oil and wine.' Whiles it is called the 'bread of life,' John vi. 51. In a word to tell you what this feast is, it is this Christ and all his

saving graces freely given to thy soul. Then,
3. It is great in respect of the manner of its preparation: I confess, this feast, though prepared in silver, is often administered in earthen vessels, and clay dishes: and though it be mingled with butter and honey, yet this makes the natural man, when he looks upon it, not to think much of it, because he looks on the out-side of it only. But would to God your eyes were opened to see the inside of it, and not to be like proud Naaman, who said, 'What better is this water of Jordan than the water of Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus?' 2 Kings v. 12. as some say, 'What better is this feast nor the feast we have at home? As the man of God prayed for his servant, 'Lord, open his eyes that he may see;' and the Lord opened his eyes, and he saw another sight, even the mountain full of horses, and flaming chariots of fire; so I pray the Lord open all your eyes, that ye may see the many differences between this feast and all other feasts; for other feasts are but feasts for the body, and they are but feasts for the belly; an Esau may have them, a reprobate may feed upon them. These are nothing else but the swines husks, whereon the prodigal fed for a time, and scarce could get them; but when he came back again to his father's house, then he fed upon the fatted calf; and then he got a feast, and then was there plenty, then did his well run over, then was his cup to the brim, and overflowing. O that ye knew your Father's house,

and the fatness, the fulness, the feast, and the plenty that are there, ye would all hunger after it, and would then say, alas! I have been feeding on husks too long, 'now will I arise and go to my Father's house, where there is bread enough.' All the Lord's steps drop plenty and fatness. 4. I told you that this supper is a great feast in respect of the great number that are called unto it. The poorest thing in all the land is called unto it: the Jews are called, the Gentiles are called, yea the poorest thing that is hearing me is called; such as a great man would not look on, but he would close the gates on such an one; a great man would not deign himself to look on them in his kitchen; yet come ye away to this feast, the King of kings has his house open, and his gates patent, he has a ready feast, and a room house, and fair open gates, and every body shall be welcome that will come. 'Whosoever thirsts; let him come, and take of the water of life freely,' Rev. xxi. 17. And now through all the nukes and corner's of this kingdom of Scotland, Christ is sending out his servants, and I am sent out unto you this day, crying unto you 'Come away, his oxen and fatlings are killed, his wine is drawn, and his table furnished, and all things ready.' 5. I told you it was a great feast, in respect of the place where it is kept. There are two dining-rooms; 1. A dining-room above. 2. A dining-room below. 1st, A dining-room above, that is a high dining-room, that is a fair house, that

is a trim place. O the rivers of the Lord's consolations that run there: I confess, in this lower dining-room of the church, the waters come first to the ancles, then to the mid-leg, then to the knees, then to the thigh, and then past wading; but then shall ye get fullness, when ye come up to that dining-room. And when ye come there, there shall be no more hunger, no more thirst, there shall be no more scant nor want, nor any more sour sauce in your feasts, neither any more sadness, nor sorrowful days; but eat your fill, and drink your fill. And many shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down at that royal and rare covered table, with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and get their fill to their hungered; 'When I awake (says David) I shall be filled with thy likeness,' Psalm xvii. 15. Poor soul, thou canst never get thy fill; I wish to God thou got a soup and a drop to set thee by till then. Indeed if thou hadst a vessel, thou shouldst get thy fair fill even in this life. And I dare say, if thou wouldst seek, and seek on, and seek instantly 'the Lord would one day or other make thee drink of the new wine of the gospel; he would give thee a draught, a fair draught, a fill, a fair fill of the wine of his consolation, he would make you suck the milk at the breasts of his consolation; but he will ay keep the best wine hindmost, as he did at the marriage of Cana in Galilee, where the best wine was kept hindermost. Therefore, poor thing, lift up thy head, and

gather thy heart; ere it be long thou shalt get a draught of the best wine in thy Father's house, where there are many mansions, and many dwelling-places. 'I go (says Christ) 'to prepare a place for you:' and he will come again, and receive you to himself, where ye shall drink abundantly of the new wine of the gospel. *Lastly*, This supper is a great one in respect of the continuance of it: it lasts not for one day, but for ever; it lasts not for a hundred and four-score days, but for ever, and evermore. Poor thing, who possibly gets some blyth morning blinks in upon thy soul, and possibly gets a taste of this cup in the morning, and long ere even thou art hungering and thirsting again, and thou wots not where to meet thy Lord, and all the thing thou hast gotten is forgotten; in the day that he shall come, then thou shalt feast constantly and continually in thy Father's house, where thou shalt never want thy arms full, thou shalt never want thy Lord out of thy sight, neither shall thy Lord ever want thee, but he shall ever be with thee, and thou with him; thou shalt follow the Lamb whithersoever he goes.

'Behold I have prepared my dinner.' *First*, All this feast was for a marriage; and here is a wonder, a world's wonder, a behold, which notes divers things: 1. Behold it for an admiration. 2. Behold it for an excitation. 3. Behold it for consolation. 4. Behold it for instruction. Behold, and be awakened; behold, and be excited; behold, and be com-

forted; behold, and admire; behold, and wonder, that the King of heaven's Son will marry your soul! Then behold, and come away to your own marriage; behold, lost man shall get a Saviour, behold, the King's Son will be a Saviour to a slave; behold the King's Son will drink the potion, and the sick shall get health; behold, the King's Son will marry himself upon thee! 'I will marry 'thee unto me in faith and in righteousness,' Hof. ii. 19, 20. 'Thou that was a widow and 'reproached,' like a poor widow that has many foes, but few friends; yet, says the Lord, 'Thou shalt not remember the reproach of 'thy widow-hood any more, Isa. liv. 4. Then behold, and come away to the marriage. Now, 'Who are these that are invited to the 'marriage?' I told you, 1. The Jews are invited. 2. The Gentiles are invited; yea, you are invited; I thank the bridegroom you are invited; I shall bear witness of it, when I am gone from you, you are invited. And I thank the Lord, I have more to bear witness of; yea, that which comforts my soul, by all appearance the greatest part of you are come in, and by all good appearance ye have the wedding garment. I hope God has a people among you; this I shall bear witness of, when I am gone from among you; the greatest part has lent an ear; the Lord bear it in upon your hearts with his own blessed presence.

1. 'He sent his servants forth.' He gives many a cry himself, and many a shout himself. Is not that one of God's cries, Matth.

xi. 28. 'Come unto me, all ye that are weary and laden, and I will ease you:' O but that is a sweet word, thou art a weary thing, with a fore load of sin upon the neck of thy soul, and thou art like to sink under it, and art crying, what will come of thee? He is bidding thee come away, and get a drink of the marriage-wine to cheer thy fainting spirit; and if thou be weary, he shall ease thee.

Object. Alas! Sin hinders me, that I cannot come; sin is so black and ugly upon me; and so heavy, that I cannot come.

Ans. 'Come (says the Lord) I will reason with you,' Isa. i. 18. that is, I will have your faults discovered, and will have you convicted of your faults; but when I have reasoned with you, will I cast you away? Nay; but though your sins were red as 'Crimson,' they shall be made white as snow or wool.'

Object. 2. Alas! but my sins are many, how can the Lord look upon me or pardon me?

Ans. Isa. lv. 7. 'Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, for he will abundantly pardon; for my ways are not your ways, neither my thoughts your thoughts; but as the heaven is high above the earth, so are my thoughts, (in pardoning) higher nor yours' (in sinning). Come away, poor thing, then, and get thy heart full of mercy; and because such a fair offer is hard to be laid hold on, therefore he goes to the market-cross, like an herald with a great O yes, that all men there may be awakened. It

is not little that will awaken sleeping sinners, therefore he puts to an O yes. 'Ho, come every one that thirsteth, buy wine and milk without money, and without price. Why do ye spend your money for nought?' Ye have spent your strength too long in vain; ye have been feeding on husks too long; ye have forsaken mercy and embraced vanity too long. Come away, and he 'will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.'

2. 'He sent forth his servants.' This is a great wonder, that he calls on his servants, and sends them to them; this is wonderful! he stood not on complements, who should be first in the play: ye would never have sought him, if he had not sought you; ye would never have loved him, if he had not loved you with the love of Christ. I would say a comfortable word to a poor soul: is there any soul in this house this day, that has chosen the Lord for the love and delight of his soul? Thou wouldst never have chosen him, if that loving and gracious God had not chosen thee. Is there any soul in this house this day, that is filled with the love of Christ? Thou wouldst never have loved him, if he had not loved thee first? Is there any soul that is seeking unto him in earnest? Be comforted, he is seeking thee; and hast found thee, and gart thee seek him. I might produce scripture for all these, but the points are plain.

3. Lo, a greater wonder! 'He sent forth his servants.' Ye would think, if any had

wronged you, it were their part to seek you, and not yours to seek them; or, if any baser than another had done a wrong, it beseemed him to be the most careful to take pains, and seek to him whom he had wronged: But behold here a wonder! The great God seeking base man! the offended God seeking offending man! And is this because he has need of you? Nay, canst thou be a party for him? Canst thou hold the field against him? Nay, 'Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?' Shall the crawling worm, and the pickle of small dust fight against the King of kings? Art thou able to stand out against him, or pitch any field against him? Nay, I tell thee, Oman, there is not a pickle of hair in thy head, but if God arise in anger, he can cause it seem a devil unto thee, and every nail of thy fingers, to be a torment of hell against thee. O Lord of hosts, and King of kings, who can stand out against thee? And yet thou hast offended him, and run away from him, and mis kent him, and transgressed all his commandments, and hell and wrath, and judgment is thy portion which thou deserveest, and yet the Lord is sending out his servants, to see if they can make an agreement. Then for God's sake, think on this wonder: for all this text is full of wonders, all God's works are indeed full of wonders, but this is the wonder of wonders. We then are God's ambassadors, I beseech you to be reconciled to God. Should not ye have sought unto him first, with ropes about

your necks, with sackcloth upon your loins, and with tears in your eyes? Should not ye have lain at his door, and scraped, if ye could not knock? And yet the Lord hath sent me to you, and our faithful men about here, crying, Come away to the marriage: Come away, I will renew my contract with you; I will not give you a bill of divorcement, but I will give my Son to you; and your souls that are black and blae, I will make them beautiful. Behold yet another wonder! When he has sent out other servants, and they got a nay-say; yet he will not take a nay-say. Ye know a good neighbour, when he has prepared a dinner for another of his neighbours, sends out his servants, intimating that all things are ready, the table is covered, and dishes set on; if once warned, he refuses, he might well send once or twice to him, but at last he would take a displeasure, and not send again: but behold a wonder! He sends out his servants, in the plural number. But behold a great wonder! After one servant is abused; he sends out others, and when they are slain, and spitefully used by these who should have followed their call, and come in; what does the Lord? Read the chapter before, and ye shall see a great wonder; 'he sent out his own SON:' when Moses cannot do it, when the prophets cannot do it, when John the Baptist cannot do it; well, says the Lord, I will see if my Son can do it; I have not a Son but one, and that is the Son of my love, and I will make him a man, and send him down among

them, and see how they will treat him: and when he comes, they cry out, 'There is the heir let us kill him.' But behold a greater wonder! That after these servants are abused, and spitefully handled; and after the Son himself is come, and has drunken of the same cup, after he has died a shameful death, and after they had put their hands on the heir; yet, when all is done, the Lord sends servants upon servants, preachers upon preachers, apostles upon apostles to call in the people of the Jews, to see if they will marry his Son. Then behold and wonder at all their wonders! and let all knees bow down before God. Lord stamp your hearts with this word of God: God grant you could be kind to him, as he has been kind to you, and testified the same, by putting to salve to your soul, and bringing it into the wedding.

'He sent forth his servants.' We may learn from this, that we who art the brethren in the ministry must be servants, and not lords. I wish at my heart, that we knew what we are, and that we knew our calling, and what we have gotten in trust; for we serve the best master in the world; but I'll tell you, he is the strictest master that can be. I'll tell thee, O minister, and I speak it to thee with reverence, and I speak it to myself, There is a day coming, when thou must answer to God for what thou hast got in charge, thou must answer to God for all the talents thou hast got, whether ten or two; for all have not got alike: But, dear brethren, happy is the man,

if he had but one talent, that puts it out for his Lord's use; and Lord be thanked, that he will seek no more of me than he has given me. There are many things to discourage a faithful minister; but yet this may encourage us, that we serve the best master, and that is a sure recompence of reward that is abiding us. Indeed he has not sent us out to seek ourselves, or to get gain to ourselves, he has not sent us out to woo a bride to ourselves, or to woo home the lord to our own bosom only, but he has sent us to woo a bride, and to deck and trim a spouse for our Lord and Master. And ye that are ministers of Glasgow ye shall all be challenged upon this; whether or not ye have laboured to woo and trim a bride for your Lord: but I know that you will be careful to present your flocks as a chaste spouse to him. And we also that are ministers in landwart, we are sent out for this errand, it matters not what part of the world we be in, if we do our Master's service; and the day is coming, when thou must answer to God for thy parish whether thou hast laboured to present it as a chaste spouse to Christ. It may gar the soul of the faithful minister leap for joy, when he remembers the day of his Majesty's faithful meeting and his, when he shall give up his accounts, and then it shall be seen who has employed his talent well: then shall he say, 'Well done, good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into thy Master's joy,' Matth. xxv. 23. or rather 'Let thy Master's joy enter into

‘ thee, and take and fill thy soul with it.’ Many a sad heart has a faithful watchman; but there is a day coming, when he shall get a joyful heart. But for whom especially is this joy reserved? It is even for those ‘ who ‘ convert many to righteousness; they shall ‘ shine like the stars in the firmament, in the ‘ kingdom of their Father,’ Dan. xii. 2. Matth. xiii. 43. It is plain this belongs not to thee, O faithless watchman. What hast thou been doing? Busking a bride for thyself? Busking a bride for the Pope of Rome, the bishop of Rome, even for antichrist? becking and binging to this table and that altar, bringing in the tapistry of antichristian hangings, and endeavouring to set the crown on another man’s head, nor Christ’s? But thou that wilt not set on the crown on his head, and labour to hold it on, thou O preacher, the vengeance of God shall come upon thee, the blood of souls shall be upon thee. Many a kirkman eats blood, and drinks blood; Lord deliver our souls from blood-guiltiness. Dear brethren, let us repent, let us repent: I trow we have been all in the wrong to the Bridegroom; shame shall be upon thee that thinks shame to repent. I charge you all, before the timber and stones of this house, and before that same day-light that ye behold, and that under no less pain nor the loss of the salvation of your souls, that ye wrong not the Bridegroom nor his bride any more. But we come to our point:

We are servants and not lords. I see never

a word in this text, nay, nor in all the scripture that the Master of the feast sent out lords to woo home his bride; he 'sent out 'his servants', but not his lords. Read all the Bible from the beginning to the ending, you shall not find it. Daft men may dispute, and by respect may carry it away; but read all the Old and New Testament both, and let me see if ever this lord prelate, or that lord bishop was sent to woo home his bride.

Object. 1. We have our prerogative from Aaron, from Moses, from the apostles, from Timothy.

Ans. I trow ye be like bastard bairns that can find no father. So they shall never be able to get a father, for man has set them up, and man is their father.

Object. 2. Find we not the name of bishop under the New Testament?

Ans. Yes; but not the bishop of a diocese, such as, my Lord Glasgow, and my Lord St. Andrew's; but we find a pastor or a bishop over a flock. It is a wonderful matter to me, that men should think to reason this way; for in the Old Testament there is not an office, nor an office-bearer, but is distinctly determined in the making of the tabernacle; there is not a tackle, nor the quantity of it, not a curtain, nor the colour thereof, not a snuffer, nor a candlestick, nor a besom that sweeps away the filth, nor an ash-pan that keepeth the ashes, but all are particularly set down; yet, ye will not get a bishop, nor an arch-bishop, nor this metropolitan, nor that

great and cathedral man, no not within all the Bible. The Lord pity them; for indeed I think them objects of pity, rather than of malice. Christ is a perfect king, and a perfect prophet. Thou canst never own him to be a perfect priest and king, that denies him to be perfect prophet; and a perfect prophet he can never be, except he has set down all the offices and office-bearers requisite for the government of his house; but so has he done, therefore is he perfect.

Obj. But they will call themselves servants.

Ans. The fox may catch a while the sheep, and the the Pope may call himself *servus servorum*, the servant of servants: and they will call themselves brethren, when they write to us; but they will take it very highly and hardly, if we call them brethren, when we write back to them again: but men shall be known by their fruits, and by their works, to be what they are, and not what they call themselves. But if they will be called servants and yet remain lords, let them take heed that they be not such servants, as cursed Canaan was, 'a servant of servants shall he be.' Take heed that they be not * serving mens wrath and vengeance, and not servants 'by the grace of God, and by the mercy of God,' as they stile themselves. 2. Let them take heed that they be not such servants as Gehazi was; he was a false servant, he ran away after the courtier Naaman, seeking gifts, and said his

* This phrase is to be understood of the Bishops being the instruments of executing the displeasure of the king and malignant courtiers against the people of God.

master sent him, when (God knows) his master sent him not; at the time he should have been praying to the Lord, to help his poor kirk, and comfort her; the curse and vengeance of God came upon him, and he was stricken with leprosy for his pains: such servants are these men who now sit down on their cathedral nests, labouring to make themselves great like Gehazi: let them take heed that their hinder end be not like his. 3. Let them take heed that they be not such servants as Ziba was to Mephibosheth, who not only took away what was his by right, but also went to the king with ill tales of poor cripple Mephibosheth: such servants are these who not only rob the church of her privileges and liberties, but also run up to the king with lies and ill tales of poor Mephibosheth, the cripple kirk of Scotland. 4. Let them take heed that they be not such servants as Judas was, an evil servant indeed; he sold his Master for gain, as ill servants do. Or like these that strike the bairns when they are not doing any fault: and they are ill servants who busk their Master's spouse with antichrist's busking. Wo unto them, and the man who is the head of their kirk, whose cross and trumpery they would put on the Lord's chaste spouse. But if they will call themselves servants, and yet remain lords, let them take heed that they be not of this category that I have reckoned up. The Lord make us faithful servants, and the Lord rid his house of them.

Time will not suffer me to go through the

rest of the text, only I will take a glance of some things which make for your use at this time.

Quest. How are their servants treated?

Ans. Some of them get *nolimus* upon the back of their bill: some of them are beaten, and spitefully used and slain. Dear hearts, know ye not how Moses was used? how Aaron and Jeremiah, &c. were used? how Zechariah was slain between the porch and the altar? how Jeremiah was smitten; and he that did it, got his name changed into Magor Misfabib, *terror round about*? Know ye not that Zedekiah struck Micajah; and how his threatenings against him came to pass? Always we may learn from this, that the Lord's best servants have been, and will be abused, and spitefully used? This is a great sin lying upon Scotland, England and Ireland. Many faithful servants in the three kingdoms have been spitefully used; their cheeks burnt, their noses ript up, their faces marked; some of them put into a stinking prison, where they had not an hour's health, and many of them rugged from their flocks, and their flocks from them. Look over to the kingdom of Ireland, the many desolate congregations that are there; many a dear one there, that would have had a blyth soul, to have had your last Sunday, or seen it, or to have assurance of such a day before they come into heaven. Pray for the peace of Zion, and pity those poor things who would be content to go from one sea-bank to the other, to be in your place to day. And

truly the blood of these poor things is crying for vengeance to light where it should light; for the blame lies upon none but the proud prelates. If I would pose you with this question, as you will answer to God, who have been the instruments of all this mischief? I am sure the most ignorant among you can answer, None but the proud beasts the prelates. The Lord give them repentance.

I know not how you have handled your pastors in this town, because I am but a stranger; but trow ye that two silly men that came among you can do any thing, if your own pastors had not laid the foundations: but for God's sake honour and respect your pastors, I mean those of them that keep the covenant of Levi. And ye that have broken it, and will not come to renew it again, shame and dishonour will be upon you for evermore. I have my message from the 2d of Malachi, 'I will pour contempt upon them who have broken the covenant of Levi.' Therefore let pastors and people enter both within this covenant; for it is the sweetest thing in the world, to see pastors and a people going one way. Therefore come away all of you unto the wedding, come and subscribe the contract, put to your heart and hand to it. Blessed be God for what already ye have done.

2. Some of the servants got a nay-say, and some of them were beaten; hence we learn, that every minister will not be beaten, nor will get the stroke to keep; but if a minister get a nay-say, it will make him as sad as if he

had gotten fore strokes. If a minister get a day-say that has been travelling these many years in the ministry, and yet cannot get one soul brought unto the Lord, that will make him as sad as fore strokes will do. When an honest minister has laboured many years painfully in the sweat of his brows, and has never had another tune, but, Come away, come away unto the marriage; and when he walks among them, and sees never one coming in, nor never one that has on the wedding garment, what will be the complaint of the poor man? O then he will cry out with Isaiah, Lord, who believes my report, and to whom has the arm of the Lord been made naked? Lord, I have laboured in vain, and spent my strength for nought: What will come of me, after so many years travel in the ministry? I have not brought forth one child. The Lord forbid that ye our people break your ministers hearts. And as for you, brethren, be more watchful over your flocks, be more busy in catechising and exhorting them. And urge the duty of the covenant upon them, and when they are on foot, hold them going; lead them to the fountain and cock-eye. Lead them to the well-spring; and make meikle of them; feed the Lord's lambs, as Christ said to Peter, 'If thou lovest me, feed my sheep; lovest thou me, I say, feed my sheep.' Minister, lovest thou me? feed my bais'd sheep: lovest thou me? feed my lambs. Ye must be feeders, and not fleecers; pastors, but not wolves; builders,

but not destroyers; and come away, and help up the broken down wall of Jerusalem. For if one of you can bring timber here, another bring mortar, a third bring stones, and make up a flap in Zion; and I hope we that came here shall go home with blyth news to our congregations, that we cannot say we have got a cold welcome; so I hope ye will think it your greatest comfort, and your greatest credit also. Venture in covenant with God, and whosoever thou be, that wilt not enter in covenant, we will have thy name, and we will pour out our complaints before God for thee; for we that are ministers must be faithful to our Master; and I take you all to witness, that we have discharged our commission faithfully; and I hope the blessing of the Lord shall be upon them that have given us an invitation of this kind: and it may be your greatest comfort, that now ye may go homely unto your Lord, being formerly in covenant with him; and your greatest credit also, for ye never got such a credit, as to lend your Master's honour a lift. We come to the excuses.

‘But they went their way, one to his farm, and another to his merchandise.’ Luke is more large in this, and saith, ‘I have bought a piece of ground, and must needs go see it; another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them; and the third said, I have married a wife and therefore I cannot come.’ We learn here, that never a man refuses Christ but from some

by-respects, such as a farm, oxen and marriage, &c. I never saw a man staying back from the covenant, but from some by-respects; either some respect to the world, or to men, or to the court, or such bastard by-respects to some statesmen, or to a prelate, or to the king himself, who, we trust, ere it be long, shall think them the honestest men that came in soonest; therefore cast away all by-respects. The apostle John includes their excuses under three different expressions, 1 John ii. 16. 'The pride of life,' including the farm; 'the lust of the heart,' including the merchandise; and 'the lust of the flesh,' including the marriage. Therefore let every soul that would love and follow Christ, deny himself, and lay aside excuses. Deny thy own wit, will and vanities, and lay aside all by-respects, and I shall warrant thou shalt come running, and get Christ in thy arms. 2. Is it a respect to prelacy that hinders thee, O Scotland? cursed be the day that ever they were born. 3. Is it a respect to the novations already come into Scotland? I may say cursed be these brats of Babel. It had been best to have rent them at the beginning, for many woful days have they brought on, and woful divisions have they brought in, and woful backslidings have they occasioned. Therefore away with these by-respects. 4. Is it a respect to the king? The Lord bless our king. Says not the covenant enough for the maintenance of the king? As for the word which they call combinations, it reserves always

the honour of God, and the honour of the king; protesting, That we mind nothing that may tend to the diminution of the king's greatness and authority. Yea, I know no other mean under heaven to make many loyal subjects, but by renewing our covenant.

2dly, I would have had the men that made these excuses framing them another way; I would have had him that married the wife, saying, My wife has married me; and he that bought his oxen, saying, My oxen have bought me; and he that went to his farm, saying, My farm has bought me. And if ye will mark the words, ye will find them run this way. 1. Marriage is lawful; but when a man beastes himself in his carnal pleasures, then the wife marries the man; 'therefore let them that have wives, be as though they had them not, and them that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not,' 1 Cor. vii. 29. 2. Buying of farms is lawful, but when a man becomes a slave to his own gain, it takes away the soul of him, the farm buys the man; likewise husbandry is lawful, but when a man yokes his neck under the world, it trails and turmoils him so, that he cannot take on the yoke of Jesus. 3. Thus also the merchandise buys the man. Then for Jesus Christ's sake, cast away all excuses, and come away now, and marry Christ. 1. Away with thy bastard pleasures. 2. Away with thy bastard cares, and come away to Christ, and he shall season all thy cares. 3. Away with

thy falsehood, thy pride, vanity, &c. Away
 with thy corn, wine and oil, and come to
 Christ, and he shall lift up his countenance
 upon thee. The Lord give thee a blink of
 that, and then thou wilt come hopping with
 all thy speed, like unto old Jacob, when he
 saw the angels ascending and descending,
 when he ran fast, albeit he was tired, and had
 not a hard bed, and a far harder bolster the
 night before, yet he got a glorious sight, and
 his legs were souped with consolation, which
 made him run. Lord blink upon thy lazy
 soul with his amiable countenance, and then
 thou shalt rise and run, and thy fainting heart
 will receive strength, when the Lord puts in
 his hand by the key-hole of the door, and
 leaves drops of myrrh behind him, then a
 sleepy bride will rise and seek her Beloved.
 But to our point.

Marriage is lawful, merchandise is lawful,
 husbandry is lawful, but never one of these
 is lawful, when they hinder thee from the
 Lord. Neither credit, pleasure, preferment,
 houses nor lands are lawful, when they hin-
 der thee from the Lord's sweet presence.
 Jerom said well, 'Though my old father
 were hanging about my neck, and my sweet
 mother had me in her arms, and all my dear
 children were sticking about me, yet when
 my Lord Jesus called upon me, I would cast
 off my old father, and throw my sweet mo-
 ther under foot, and throw away all my dear
 children, and run away to my Lord Jesus.'
 Lord grant, my beloved, that what ye have

Numb. I.

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heard of Christ may sink in your souls: and when ye have seen poor things running here and there, to get a prayer here, and a prayer there, and ye wonder what they are seeking, they are seeking their Beloved; and if ye ask, 'What is their Beloved more than another?' They will answer, my Beloved is the fairest and trimmest, and the highest and honourablest in the world; he has the sweetest eyes, the sweetest cheeks, the sweetest lips, and trimmest legs and arms, yea he is altogether lovely; and then they will be made to cry out, 'O thou fairest among women, tell us 'whither is thy Beloved gone, that we may 'seek him with thee?' O if we knew him! Lord work upon you the knowledge of him. O what a business would ye make to be at him! Lord grant that our ministry may leave a stamp upon your hearts. Then had we gotten a rich purchase. Would to God ye were like that marquis in Italy, who fled from thence to Geneva, being persecuted by the Jesuites; and when they followed him, and offered him sums of gold, he answered, 'Let these perish forever who part with an hour's fellowship with Christ, for all the gold under heaven.' And sundry of the martyrs being at the stake, having this and that offered to them, they had still this word, None but Christ, none but Christ: and when they were bidden, Have mind of your well favoured wife, and your poor children; they answered, 'If I had all the money and gold in the world, I would give it to stay with my

wife and poor children, if it were but in a stinking prison; but sweet Christ is dearer unto me than all.' Then cast away all excuse. Would to God we were like that woman, when going to the stake; 'I have born many children, (says she) and yet notwithstanding of all these pains, I would suffer them all over again, for one hour's fellowship with my Lord.' Then come away, come away, cast away all excuses, come away; as the spouse says, 'The storm is past and over, 'the winter is away, the time of singing of 'birds is come, and the voice of the turtle 'is heard in our land; arise, my fair one, 'and come away.' God be thanked, there is a sad winter over Scotland's head, and our figs are blossoming, and our trees are budding, and bringing forth fruit, now is the turtle singing, and his voice is heard in our land: now is Christ's voice heard, now is our Bridegroom standing waiting on our way-coming; and here am I in his name, crying unto you, Come away: here am I to honour my Master: all honour be to him for ever and ever. Come away then, for the winter is going, the summer is approaching, our vines are blossoming, in token of a fair summer: arise, arise, and come away.

Ver. 9. 'Go ye therefore, go ye out to 'the high-ways:' as if he would say, Well, I see the Jews will not come in; therefore go your ways and fetch in the Gentiles. Yet I hope in God, there shall many of the Jews come in shortly. They spake for you, when

ye could not speak for yourselves; they said, 'We have a little sister, and she has no breasts; what shall we do for her in the day she shall be spoken for?' Now pray ye for them. Always they refused to come in, as ye heard; and not being worthy, they would not come to him, to make them worthy.—

Always, says the Lord, go out, and call in the Gentiles to my table; my Son may not want a wife: he is too great a king to want a spouse, and my supper is too good cheer to be lost; therefore go and fetch in the Gentiles. I thank the Lord that ye are come in. I know not a town in the kingdom of Scotland that is not come in, except one, and I am afraid for the wrath of God to light on that shortly. Always God hath his own time. But trow ye, that God will give that honour to every one? Nay. I protest in my own silly judgment (howbeit I cannot scance upon kings crowns) that it were the greatest honour that ever king Charles got, to subscribe the covenant. But trowyethat every minister, and every burgh will come in? Nay: if you will read the history 2 Chron. xxx. 10. you will see the contrary; when Hezekiah was going to renew the covenant, and to keep the the passover, the holy text says, that numbers mocked, and thought themselves over jelly to come in; but those whose hearts the Lord had touched, they came in, and kept the blyth day. Indeed I was afraid once, that Christ should had left old Scotland, and gone to new Scotland, and that he should have left old England,

and gone to new England: and think ye not but he can easily do this? Has he not a famous church in America, where he may go to? Indeed I know not a kingdom in all the world, but if their plots had gone on, they had been at antichrist's shore ere now; but all his limbs and liths, I hope shall be broken, and then shall our Lord be great: therefore come away in with your wedding garment, and ye that have not put it on, now put it on, and come away to the marriage: and I thank the Lord, that ye are prevailed with, by God's assisting of our faithful brethren to bring you in; the Lord grant that ye may come in with your wedding garment. It is but a small matter for you to hold up your hand; and yet, I suspect, some of you when it was in doing took a back-side. I tell you that it is no matter of sport, to bourn with God: therefore come away with your wedding garment; for the Master of the feast sees you, and knows all that are come to the marriage-feast. I know you not, but my Master knows you every one: he knows who came in on Sunday, and who came in yesterday, and who will come in to day, and who are going to put on their wedding garment, and cast away their duds. Away with your duds of pride, your duds of greed and of malice; away with all these duds, and be like the poor blind man in the gospel, who when he knew that Christ called him, he cast his old cloak from him, and came away; so do ye, cast aside all excuses, and come to the wedding,

and now with a word of the wedding, garment I will end.

This wedding garment consists of three pieces: 1. There is one piece of it looks to God, and that is holiness. 2. There is another piece of it looks to ourselves, and that is sobriety. 3. Another piece of it looks to our neighbour, and that is righteousness.

The first is holiness; I charge you to put it on: ye that are the provost and baillies, I love you dearly, and all the members of the town; gentlemen, and all gentlewomen, and all of you I love you dearly; and therefore I charge you all before God, in my last farewell unto you, to be holy, according as ye have sworn in your covenant.

2. Be sober. Howbeit I be a stranger, yet I like brotherly love and Christian fellowship well; but drunkenness and gluttony, feasting and carousing I hate, especially now when the kirk of Scotland is going in dool-weed: therefore be sober; 1. Be sober in your apparel; I think there is too much of gaudy apparel among you. 2. Be sober in your conceits. 3. Be sober in your judgments. 4. Be sober in your self-conceiting. 5. Be sober in your speaking. 6. Be sober in your sleeping. 7. Be sober in your lawful recreations. 8. Be sober in your lawful pleasures: and finally, Be sober in all respects; that it may be seen ye are the people that have renewed your covenant.

3. Be righteous. I know not if ye have false weights and ballances among you; but whether there be or not, I give you all

charge, who have sworn the covenant, to be righteous.

In a word, this wedding garment is Jesus Christ; Rom. xiii. 14. 'Put ye on the Lord 'Jesus Christ.' I cannot give you a better counsel, nor Christ pave to Martha; forget the many things, and chuse that one thing which is needful; and with David, still desire that one thing, 'To behold the beauty of the 'Lord in his temple;' and with Paul, 'Forget the things that are behind, and press forward to the prize of the high-calling thro' 'Jesus Christ.' The Lord fill your hearts with the love of Christ.

If thou askest, What will this garment do to thee? I answer, This garment serves, 1. For necessity. 2. For ornament. 3. For distinction.

1. For necessity. And this is threefold. 1. To cover thy nakedness, and hide thy shame. 2. To defend thy body from the cold of winter, and heat of summer. 3. For necessity, to hold in the life of the body. So put on Jesus Christ this wedding garment; and, 1. He shall cover the shame of thy nakedness with the white linen of his righteousness. 2. He shall defend thee when the wind of trial begins to blow rough and hard, and when the blast of the terrible One is arising, to rain fire and brimstone upon the world; 'Then he shall be a 'tabernacle for a shadow in the day time from 'the heat, and a place of refuge for a covert 'from storm and from rain,' Isa. iv. 10. 'A 'refuge from the storm, and shadow from the 'heat, when the blast of the terrible One is

‘as a storm against the wall,’ Isa. xxv. 4. When men are pursuing, he shall be a brazen wall about thee; and when they pursue thee, he shall keep thee in his bosom.

2. A garment is for an ornament. Who is the best favoured body; and the trimmest soul? Even the poor soul that has put on the bridegroom Jesus: that soul is fair and white, and altogether lovely, ‘There is no spot in it,’ Cant. iv. 7. because the Lord hath put upon it, ‘Brodered work, bracelets and ornaments,’ Ezek. xvi. 11.

3. A garment is for distinction. There must be a distinction among you, between you and the wicked world, because ye have renewed your covenant with God: and this distinction must not only be outwardly (for an hypocrite may seem indeed very fair) but it must be by inward application. I desire you all that are hearing me, not only to put it on, but to hold it on: put it on, and hold it on; for it is not like another garment, neither in matter, nor shape, nor in use, nor in durance. I may not insist to handle it, but it is not like other garments, especially it is not like a bridegroom’s garment, which he has on to-day, and off to-morrow. Therefore I charge you all your days, to hold it on. Ay, that which ye had on upon Sunday last, and yesterday, and which you have on this day, see that ye cast it not off to-morrow. What heard you cried on Sunday last, and yesterday, and this day? Hosanna, hosanna. And wherefore cried ye yesterday and this day, Hosanna, hosanna? Look

that when we are away, and your ministers not preaching to you, that ye cry not, ‘Crucify him, crucify him.’ I fear that many who last Sunday, yester day and this day, have been crying, Hosanna, hosanna, shall, long ere the next Sunday, cry, ‘Crucify him, and hang him up.’ But I charge you, O sons of Zion, and ye daughters of Jerusalem, that your tongues never cease in crying, Hosanna, till Christ come and dwell in your soul: then cast not off your wedding garment, but put it on, and hold it on.

Moreover, hold it clean, trim and white: ‘These who have their garments clean shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy,’ Rev. iii. 4. I know ye dwell where antichrist hath a nest, and a hole; therefore, keep your garments clear: a man that has put on new silk stockings, or a stand of trim clothes, will be very careful to go about a mire; and if he happen to catch a spark, he will be careful to rub it out again. Therefore by all means, take heed where ye sit down: a neat and sprush man will take heed to this, so do ye. For Christ’s sake hold your garments clean, and take heed where ye sit down.

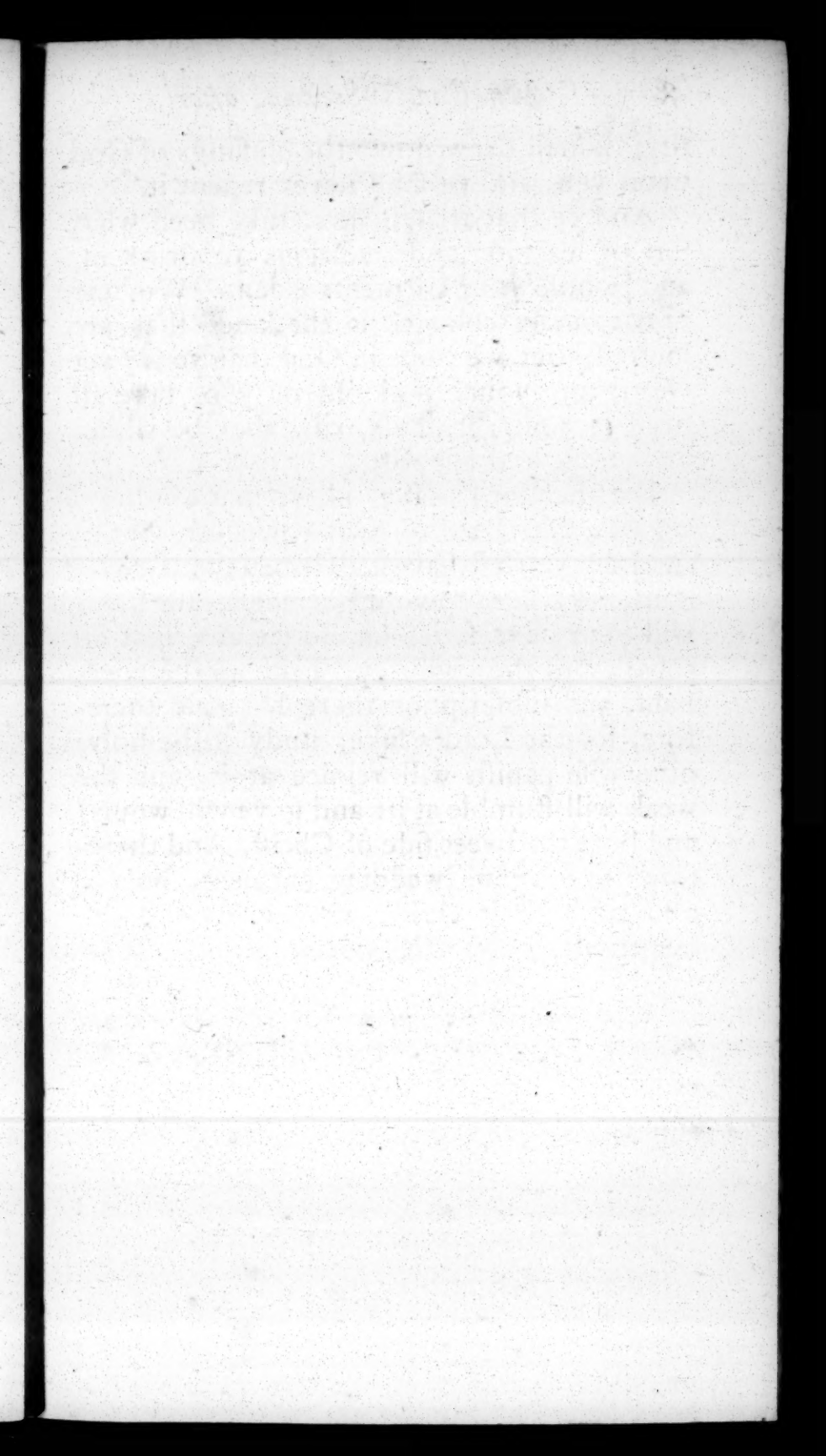
Ye that are masters of this college, if ye count me worthy to speak to you, I would have you keep your garments clean, and take heed that ye be not spotted with uncovenanted spots. I hope ye will not stand to enter in covenant with God: this will honour your persons, and advance the flourishing estate of your univer-

sity; it shall draw down the blessings of God upon you, and ye shall never repent it.

And ye that are scholars, take heed what sort of learning and traditions ye drink in, and so hold your garments clean. We hear of too many colleges in the land, that are spotted; but we hope in God that ye are yet clean: and young and old of you, take all heed to your garments, that they be white, and clean, and beautiful.

For the Lord's sake, all ye that are hearing me, take heed to your garments, but especially ye that have subscribed your covenant, take heed to your garments; for Blyth will your adversaries be, to see any spot on them; and they will say, Take up the covenant, and subscription thereof. And therefore, for the Lord's sake, study to be holy; otherwise papists will rejoyce at it, and the weak will stumble at it: and so ye will wound and bore the sweet side of Christ. And therefore put on your wedding garment, hold it on, and hold it clean; walk wisely and circumspectly before the world.

Now I commend you to him who is able to strengthen, stablish and settle you; to him be glory, honour and dominion, for ever and ever. Amen.



THE EVIL AND DANGER OF PRELACY.

A
S E R M O N,

PREACHED AT A
GENERAL MEETING,
IN THE
BLACK-FRIAR CHURCH OF EDINBURGH,
UPON THE 13TH DAY OF JUNE, 1638.

AT

At the beginning of our last REFORMATION from
PRELACY, after the Renovation of the NATIONAL
COVENANT.

By the Reverend Mr. ANDREW CANT, sometime
Minister of the Gospel at Aberdeen.

I PETER v. 3. *Neither as being Lord's over God's heritage: but being ensamples to the flock.*

GLASGOW:

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1799.

A Sermon preached at a General Meeting,
June 13th, 1638.

*Zech. iv. 7. Who art thou, O great mountain?
before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain,
and he shall bring forth the head-stone thereof
with shouting, crying, grace, grace unto it.*

I Perceive that God will have his temple built, which had been long neglected; partly by the worldliness of the people, who had greater care of their own houses, than of the house of God; as appears by the prophet Haggai, chap. i. 3, 4. He reproves them for this fault, that they cared more for their own houses than for the house of God; partly, because of the great impediments and difficulties they apprehended in the work. Yet God having a purpose to have it builded, sends his prophets to stir them up to the building of it, Hag. ii. 4. As for impediments he promises to remove them all, and assures them of this by Haggai and Zechariah; yea, he shews to Zerubbabel and the people, that although impediments were as mountains, yet they should be removed.

I need not stand upon introductions and connections: this verse I have read, shows the scope of the prophet; viz. God will have his work going on, and all impediments removed. These times require that I should

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rather insist upon application to the present work of reformation in hand, than to stand upon the temple of Jerusalem, which we know well enough was a type of Christ's kirk, which in this land was once built, but now hath been defaced by the enemies of Christ; we have long neglected the re-edifying of it; partly, men being given more to build their own houses, nor the house of Christ; and partly, because of the great impediments that have discouraged God's people to meddle with it. Now it hath pleased God, to stir up prophets, noblemen, and people of the land, to put to their hands to this work. And I think God saith to you in this text, 'Who art thou, O great mountain? thou shalt become a plain.'

There are two parts in this text: 1. An impediment removed, under the name of a mountain, 'Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel, thou shalt become a plain.' 2. In the second part of the text, the work goeth up, and is finished, the impediment being removed, 'He shall bring forth the head-stone thereof with shouting, crying, grace, grace, be unto it.'

But that ye may take up all that is to be said in order and method; there are six steps in the text, three in the mountain, impeding the work, and three in the work itself: the three in the mountain are these; 1. It is a mountain seen, 'O great mountain!' 2. A mountain reproved, 'Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel.' 3. A moun-

tain removed, 'Thou shalt become a plain.' The three in the work are; 1. A work growing and going up. 2. A work finished, 'He shall bring forth the head-stone thereof.' 3. A work praised, 'He shall bring forth the head-stone thereof with shouting, crying, grace, grace be unto it.' I shall speak of all these, God willing and apply them to the time.

As for the three in the mountain. 1. It is a mountain seen; it is called a *great mountain*; under this are comprehended all impediments and difficulties impending the building; all being taken together make up a great mountain, which is unpassable; the enemies who impede this work were this mountain: look Ezra iv. and ye will see the adversaries of Judah become a great mountain in the way of that work.

That ye may take up this mountain the better, I find that kings are called mountains in scripture; and good kings are so called, for these three, 1. For their sublimity; as mountains are high above the valleys, so are kings lifted up in Majesty above their subjects: some apply that place to kings, Micah vi. 2. 'Hear ye, O mountains, the Lord's controversy, and ye strong foundations of the earth.' 2. They are called mountains for their strength to guard their people. David saith, 'God hath made my mountain strong,' Psal. xxx. 3. Good kings are called mountains, by reason of the influence of peace to the people: 'The mountains shall bring peace

‘to the people, and the little hills by righteousness,’ Psalm lxxii. 3.

I find also, that the strong enemies of the church are called mountains, because of the great impediments to the kirk’s building that are made by them, as ye may see in Psalm cxliv.

This mountain (that I may speak more plainly) is Prelacy, which hath ever been the mountain in the way of our reformation: It may be, some of you that hear me, are not of my judgment concerning episcopacy; for my judgment, I ever condemned it, as having no warrant for it to be in Christ’s house; yet I am sure, that all of you that are here this day, will agree with me in this, that prelacy being antichristian, is intollerable: but such is the prelacy of this kirk, it is antichristian. I may easily prove, that amongst many marks of antichrist, these two are most evident, false doctrine, and tyranny in government: where antichrist is, there is tyrannical government, imposing laws upon the consciences of God’s people; where antichrist is, there is idolatry, superstition and error; these two are clearly in our prelacy: their idolatry, superstition, and error may be seen in their service-book, their tyranny may be seen in their book of canons. I think their are none here, but they may see this mountain: no greater tyranny hath ever been used by antichrist, than hath been used by our prelates, and exercised upon this kirk.

This mountain being seen by you all; I

would have you take a view of the quality of it. I find in scripture, that the enemies of the kirk being called mountains, are so called, because of these three qualities: the first is in Psalm lxxvi. 4. they are called 'mountains of prey;' so called, because from them the robbers rush down to the vallies, and prey upon the passengers. The second is in Jer. li. 25. Babylon a great enemy to God's kirk, is called a 'destroying mountain;' the word in its own language, is called a *pestiferous* mountain, (so called) because the pest destroys. The third is in Isa. ii. 14. they are called 'mountains of pride,' compared with the twelfth verse, and you will find these mountains called 'mountains of pride.'

Our mountain of prelacy hath all these three bad qualities: 1. It is a mountain from which they have, like robbers, made a prey of the kirk of Christ. Tell me, I pray you, and I appeal to your own consciences, who are my brethren, if their be any privilege or liberty that ever Christ gave us, but they have taken it from us, and made a prey of it. 2. This mountain is a pestiferous mountain; it hath been the mountain that hath been as a pest, to infect the kirk of Christ with superstition, heresy and error; and withal, it hath been a destroying mountain; for they have destroyed the fair carved work of our first reformation. 3. They are mountains of pride; for greater pride cannot be, than there is upon this mountain; they rule as tyrants

over their brethren, and as lord's over God's inheritance.

Ye that are noblemen, are the natural mountains of this kingdom, descended of noble predecessors, who have been as mountains indeed, defending both kirk and commonwealth. These men were but low valleys, and now are artificial mountains, made up by the art of man; at first, as low as their brethren sitting their; but piece and piece, they have mounted up; at first commissioners for the kirk, and then obtained vote in parliament, and then they usurped all the liberties of the kirk benefices, and then constant moderators to make up this mountain; and at last, the high commission is given to make the mountain strong; it is like to Daniel's tree; Dan. iv. 11. 'The tree grew, 'and was strong;' and from it, we that are ministers of Christ have our wreck.

And let me speak to you noblemen, these artificial and stotted mountains, have over-topped you who are the natural mountains; and if they have not done so, What means the great seal then? and if way could have made for it, they should have carried the white wand and privy-seal also: and this is just with God, that they have over-topped you; for every one of you came with your own shovel-full, to make up this mountain. It was thought expedient to rear up this mountain, to command and bear down poor ministers. Albeit, it is true, we have been borne down by them; yet ye that are the high moun-

ains, have not been free from their hurt: it is verylike to Jotham's parable; Judges ix. 8. &c. 'The trees of the forest will have a king over them; they come to the olive-tree, and say, Be thou king over us: the olive saith, I will not leave my fatness to be king: they came to the fig-tree, and said, Be thou our king; the fig-tree saith, I will not leave my sweetness to be king: they come likewise to the vine, and say, Be thou our king; the vine saith, I will not leave my strength to be king: they come to the bramble, and said, Be thou our king; then said the bramble to the trees, If indeed ye anoint me king over you, then come and put your trust under my shadow; and if not, let fire come forth of the bramble, and devour the tall cedars of Lebanon.' The olive trees of the ministry would not leave the fatness of God's grace, wherewith they were endued, to rule over the kirk: the fig-trees of the ministry would not leave the sweet fruits of their ministry, to bear rule in the kirk: the vines of the ministry would not leave the strong consolations of God, whereby many souls were comforted, to bear rule in the kirk: yet the brambles have taken this, and ye helped to exalt them, upon condition to trust under their shadow; and if fire hath not come forth from these brambles, upon the tall cedars of this land, I leave to your own thoughts to judge. Always this is the mountain which ye see all reared up this day, and standing in the way of our reformation.

2. The second thing in this great mountain is this, It is a mountain reprov'd: 'Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel.' When he saith of Zerubbabel, it is not only meant of Zerubbabel, but of the rest of God's people; see Haggai i. 12. There Zerubbabel, Joshua, and the rest of God's people obeyed the voice of the Lord; and in the 14th verse, all these are said to work in the house of the Lord: so under Zerubbabel all the rest of the people are comprehended; even so in this work of ours, all that are joined to this work, for the building of this work are to be accounted workers; and for them also is this mountain reprov'd, 'Who art thou, O great mountain? Who art thou who will impede this work, or shall be able to impede it, seeing God will have it forward. It is impossible for thee to impede it in these three respects: 1. In respect of the work itself. 2. In respect of the workers. 3. In respect of the impeters.

1. In respect of the work itself. It is God's work; for the house is his, and he is in it Haggai ii. 4. The Lord saith, 'Be thou strong, Zerubbabel, and Joshua, and the remnant of the people and work, for I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts.' If God be with a work, who is he that will let or impede it? God is with this work of reformation, as ye yourselves can witness; and by all our expectations this mountain is shaken and (God be praised) are not so unpassable as they were.

2. No man is able to impede this work, in respect of the workers, Hag. ii. 14. it is said, 'that God stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel, and of Joshua, and of the people, and they came and wrought in the house of the Lord.' When God stirs up men to do a good work, nothing on earth can stay it: I am sure if ever God stirred up men to a good work, he hath stirred us up to this, both noblemen, ministers and people. Wherefore, 'Who art thou, O great mountain' before God's people, that thinks to impede such a work?

3. In respect of the impederers: what are they but men, and wicked men, as ye may see in the adversaries of the Jews. Who are they that impede our work? Even men that seek honour and preferment of this world, enemies to religion, fighting against God; to whom, I may say that word in Job ix. 4. 'Who hath hardened himself against God, and prospered?' With one word more I will reprove this mountain, and go forward.

'Who art thou, O great mountain?' Wilt thou search thyself who thou art: art thou of God's building or not? I trow you are not *curis divini*, but *humani*; God nor Christ have never built thee: thou art only a hill of man's erecting; knowest thou not that Zion, against which thou art, is a hill of God's building. I will say to you then that word in Psalm lxviii. 15, 16. 'The hill of God is a high hill, as the hill of Bashan: why leap ye, ye hills? This is the hill that God de-

‘ fireth to dwell in; yea, and will dwell in it forever.’ And think ye to prevail against the people of Zion? She hath stronger mountains to guard her than ye have, Psalm cxxv. 3. ‘ As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people, from henceforth and forever.’

3. The third thing in this mountain, is, It is a mountain removed, ‘ Thou shalt be come a plain;’ that is, God shall remove all impediments before Zerubbabel, and his people; God is able to remove all that impedes his work; even the mightiest enemies that oppose themselves to the work of God; ye may observe a fourfold power of God against these mountains.

1. A *determining power*, whereby he sets such bounds to the greatest mountains, that ye see they fall not upon the vallies, albeit they overtop them. The Lord hath set bounds to the great kings in the world, which they could not pass, when they have set themselves against the Lord’s people: We may see an example of this in Sennacherib; 2 Kings xix.

32. ‘ Therefore thus saith the Lord concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come up to this city, nor shoot an arrow against it, nor come before it with shield, nor cast a bank against it.’ Ye are afraid of the king, that he come against you: fear not, the Lord by his restraining power is able to keep him back, that he shall not shoot so much as a bullet against this city.

2. God removes impediments by his *assist-*

ing power, as he promised to do before Cyrus; Isa. xlv. 2. 'I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight; I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the iron bars.' Albeit for any thing we see, there be brazen gates, and iron bars, closing out a reformation: yet let not this discourage you; God is with you by his assisting power to go before you, to make all crooked places straight, and to break the brazen gates, and to cut in sunder the iron bars.

3. God hath a *changing power*, whereby he makes mountains plain: how easy is it with God, to make the highest mountain that impedes his work a plain? Prov. xxi. 1. 'The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of waters, to turn it whithersoever he will.' Lord make our mountains thus plain.

The 4th way how God removes mountains, is by an *overthrowing power*: If there be no change yet, God will bring it down; Isa. ii. 12. 'Every one that is lifted up shall be brought low.' The like you have in the 17th verse.

By this which hath been said, ye may understand how a mountain may be made plain. God makes mountains plains, either in mercy or in wrath. 1. In mercy, when he takes a grip of the heart, and of a proud haughty heart, makes it toward and plain: we have seen such a change by experience.

This work had many enemies at the be-

gining, that impeded it, whom God hath taken by the heart, and made plain; yea, he hath made them furtherers of the work.

2. There is another way of making mountains plain, to wit, making plain in wrath, when God overthrows the mountains that stand up impeding his work. Assure yourselves, if God bring not down this mountain we have to do with, in mercy, he shall overthrow it in wrath, and make it waste.

That I may make this mountain more plain, ye shall consider how it shall become a plain, and how easily it may be made a plain.

1. I see you looking up to the height of it, and ye are saying within yourselves, How shall it come down? Ye must not think that it will come down of its own accord; God useth instruments to pull down. I find that God hath made his own people instruments to pull down such mountains: Isa. xlii. 14, 15, 16. 'Fear not, worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel, I will help thee, saith the holy One and thy Redeemer, behold I will make thee a new threshing instrument having iron teeth; thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff; thou shalt fan them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them.' Mark these words, although Jacob be a worm, despised by the great ones of the world, yet God will make him a threshing instrument, to beat these mountains in pieces. The professors of this land are despised by the mountains; yet fear

not, for the sharp threshing instrument is made, I hope it shall beat the mountains in pieces. We think them very high, but if we had faith, that word would be verified, Matth. xvi. 20. 'Ye shall say to this mountain, remove to yonder place, and it shall be removed, and nothing shall be impossible unto you.'

But one is saying, I have not faith, that all that are joined this day against the mountain shall continue. I hope they shall continue, I hope they shall; but if they do not, we trust not in men, that they shall bring down this mountain, but in God, who hath said in Jer. li. 25. 'Behold I am against thee, O destroying mountain; I will stretch out my hand upon thee, I will roll thee down from the rocks, and make thee a burnt mountain; they shall not take of thee a stone for a corner, nor a foundation; thou shalt be desolate for ever.' This mountain we see so exalted, although men would hold it up, yet God will bring it down, and make it a burnt mountain: even so, O Lord, do.

2. In the second place consider how this mountain may be made a plain: I told you it was but an artificial mountain, a stooled mountain, standing upon weak pillars; if ye would take a look of the whole frame of the mountain, it stands upon two main pillars; and upon the top of this mountain stands the house of Dagon, an house of false worship, and take me the pillars from episcopacy, and it shall fall; take episcopacy away, and the

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house of Dagon shall fall. The two main pillars that prelacy stands on, are a civil and secular arm, and an ecclesiastical tongue, so to speak.

1. The *secular arm* is the authority of princes, which have ever upholden that mountain: ye know secular princes uphold antichrist, and prelacy in this land is upholden by the secular power.

2. The second pillar I call *ecclesiastical*, that is, prelacy in this land hath been upholden by the tongues of kirkmen, preaching up this mountain, or by their pens, writing up on this mountain: and these are the two pillars whereupon our mountain of prelacy is floated, and secular power, and the tongues of kirkmen. Let the king withdraw his power and authority from the prelates, and they shall fall suddenly in dross; let kirkmen and ministers withdraw their tongues and pens from them, and our mountain (ere ye look about you) shall become a plain. As these two floated up this mountain, so upon this mountain all false worship in the kirk is built, even Dagon's house. 'Lead me, says Samson, to the pillars that Dagon's house stands on, that I may be avenged for my two eyes.' The Philistines were never more cruel to Samson in pulling out his eyes, than our prelates would have been to us: they pressed to pull out our eyes, and ere ever we were aware they thought to lead us to Dagon's house, even to the tents of popery and idolatry. Let us come to this main pillar of Dagon's house

and apply all our strength to pull it down; that we may not only be avenged for our eyes, which they have thought to pull out, but also that the house of false worship, which is erected upon this mountain, may fall to the ground.

I hear some say, Minister, for all you are saying, the mountain will not come down at this time; ye think nothing but it will down. I assure you, I would have it down, but ye must not think us that silly, as to think it will come down, because we have many for us; we trust not in men, but in God; and if this be the time that God will have it down, although ye should lay all your hands about their head, they shall come down: it appears they will come down, if there were no more but their pride, avarice, cruelty, and loose living to pull them down, especially when all these are come to height, as they are come to in them. And so much for the mountain; ye see we have reprov'd it, God remove it.

I come now to the three in the work, the mountain being removed. 1. It is a work growing and going up; 'He shall bring forth.' 2. It is a work finished; 'He shall bring forth the head-stone thereof.' 3. It is a work praised; 'He shall bring forth the head-stone thereof with shouting, crying, grace, grace, be unto it.' We shall speak of all these three shortly.

1. It is a work going up; it was impeded, but now it is going up. There is something here very considerable; the work goes not

up, until the mountain be made a plain. The mountain must not be paired or topped, but it must altogether become plain, otherwise the work cannot go up, the mountain of prelacy must not be paired nor topped, something taken away, but it must be brought down wholly, otherwise the Work of Reformation cannot go on, neither Christ's house go up.

It will be said, What ails you? You shall have your desires, but the estate of bishops must stand; it is impossible to bring it down altogether; the king may not want an estate, (truly a good one both to kirk and common-wealth) ye shall have them brought within the old bounds and caveats set down to them; they shall not hurt the kirk any more. The Lord knows how loath I was to speak from this place; but seeing God hath thrust me out, I must speak the truth.

I say to you these quarters are not to be taken, because the mountain is not of God's making, but of man's; therefore make it what way ye will, God will be displeased with it; yea it is impossible to set caveats to keep them. I appeal to all your consciences, Is it possible to set caveats to their pride and avarice? Their pride and avarice will break through ten thousand caveats. I will clear this impossibility by similitudes. Tell me, if a fountain in the town of Edinburgh were poisoned, whether were it more safe to stop up the fountain, than to set a guard to keep it, that none draw out of it, for there is hope the poison would do no harm? There is no

man of a sound judgment, but he will think it more safe to stop up the fountain, than to guard it: this prelacy is the poisoned fountain, wherefrom the kirk of Christ hath been poisoned with the poison of error and superstition. Now the question is, Whether it be safer to stop it up than to guard it? Surely it is safer to stop it up; for all the caveats in the world will not keep the kirk unpoisoned, so long as it remains. I will give you another similitude: If the town of Edinburgh were (as many towns have been, and are) taken and possessed by cruel and obstinate enemies, who would take all your liberties from you, would not suffer your magistrates to judge, and would spoil you of your goods, and use all the cruelty that could be devised against the inhabitants, if God give you occasion to be free of such a cruel and obstinate enemy: what would you do if this were proposed to you? Why may not you suffer the enemy to abide within the town? We shall take all their weapons from them, they shall never hurt you any more. Would ye not think it far better to put them out of the town altogether; both because the inhabitants would be in fear, so long as they were in the town, and because the town would never be sure: for there might be traitors among yourselves, who would steal in weapons in their hands; and so they would bring you under the former tyranny, yea under a greater. Even so it is in this case; the cruellest and greatest enemies that ever the kirk of

Scotland saw are those prelates; they have spoiled us of all our liberties, and exercised intollerable tyranny over us. Now the Lord is shewing a way how to be quit of them: consider the condition offered. What ails you? May ye not let them abide within the kirk: we shall take all their weapons from them; as admission of ministers, excommunication, and that terrible high commission; they shall never hurt you again. This is but the counsel of man; the counsel of God is, to put them out of the kirk altogether, otherwise the kirk can never be secure; yea, I assure you, there are as many traitors among ourselves, as would steal in the weapons again in their hands; then shall our latter estate be worse than our first: if our yoke be heavy under them now, it shall be heavier then; if they chastise us now with whips, they shall chastise us then with scorpions. I think I hear men speak like that word, Dan. iv. 14. 'Hew down the tree, cut down his branches, shake off his leaves, scatter his fruits; nevertheless leave the stump of his roots with a band of iron and brads.' The interpretation of that part of the vision is set down in the 26th verse; 'Thy kingdom shall be sure unto thee, after that thou hast known that the heavens bear rule.' I hear men say, Hew down the tree, cut off his branches, shake off his leaves, scatter his fruits; ye shall be quit of all that; but the stump must be left banded with iron. (If it were till they knew God, it were something, but there is no appearance of that.) Consider, O man,

who faith that, 'No man, but the watcher, ' and the holy One, even he that made Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom sure to him.' If God had made this estate sure to them, it would and should stand; and if God would bind down the stump of it with iron bands, we would never fear the growth of it, nor the fruit of it; but seeing they are only bands to be laid on by men, albeit the tree were hewed down, it would grow again in all the branches of it, with all the leaves of its dignity, and we should taste of the bitter fruit of it: ye that are covenanters, be not deceived, if ye leave so much as a hillock of this mountain in despite of your hearts it shall grow to a high mountain, which shall fill both kirk and commonwealth. If the kirk would be quit of the troubles of it, and if ye would have this work of reformation going up, this mountain must be made a plain altogether, otherwise the Spirit of God faith, Ye shall never prosper.

The 2d thing in this work, is a work finished; 'He shall bring forth the head-stone ' thereof.' When a head-stone is put on a house, the house is finished: ye who are reverend fathers in the kirk, who have seen the work of our first reformation, ye saw it going up, and brought to such a perfection, that the cape-stone was put on; purity of doctrine, and administration of sacraments, and sweetness of government, whereby the kirk was ruled; but woe's us all, we see with you now the roof taken off, the glorious

work pulled down, and lying desolate. Now, it hath pleased God to turn again, and offer a re-edifying of this work, as he did here to the people of this temple: seeing therefore the Lord hath stirred up our spirits, to crave a re-edifying of Christ's kirk, let us never take our hands from it, till Christ have put the cape-stone on it.

I hear some say, Minister, there is more a-do yet ere that be done; ye sing the triumph before the victory; ye will not see it go up at leisure.

Indeed ye are deceived; we sing not the triumph before the victory; some of us are afraid that it go not up so suddenly. I must say to you, if it be God's work, (as it is indeed) all the powers of the world shall never be able to hinder the putting on of the cape-stone. Ay, but say ye, It will be hindered; ere ye get the work forward, ye will find the dint of the fire and sword. Let it be so, if God will have it so, that will not impede the work: if our blood be spilt in this cause, the cape-stone shall be put on with our blood; for the kirk of God hath never prospered better nor by the blood of saints. Fear not, beloved, this work, whether it be done peaceably or with persecution, the cape-stone shall be put on it. Ye know in the beginning of the reformation, there was small likelihood that the work should go up, and be finished, because of the great power that was against it; yet the Lord brought it forward against all impediments; and put the cape-stone on it:

that same God lives yet, and is as able to put the cap-stone on this work, as he was then, if ye believe.

The third thing in this work, is a work praised; ‘He shall bring forth the head-stone thereof with shouting, crying, grace, grace unto it.’ All ye that build and behold the work, will love the work, and will all wish it well. He alludes by appearance, who, when the foundation of a common work is laid, rejoices, and when it is finished, rejoices. Ye may see this clear in Ezra iii. 11. at the laying of the foundation of this temple, the people shouted with a great shout: if they did that at the laying of the foundation, much more shall they do it at the bringing forth of the head-stone thereof; as is said here, the words they cry, grace, grace. The phrase comprehends under it these three things:

1. A wish of the people of God, whereby they wish prosperity to the work. Ye may see it was a common wish; Jer. xxxi. 23. ‘Thus saith the Lord of hosts, As ye shall use this speech in the land of Judah, and cities thereof, when I shall bring again their captivity: the Lord blefs thee, O habitation of justice, and mountain of holiness.’

2. It comprehends under it a thanksgiving; the workers give all praise to the work, Ezra x. 11. When the builders laid the foundation of the temple, they set the priests with their trumpets, and the Levites with their cymbals, to praise the Lord, after the ordinance of David: ‘They sang by course, praising God,

‘and giving thanks unto the Lord, because
‘he is good, and his mercy endureth forever.’

The 3d thing it comprehends under it, is a faithful acknowledgment that the work is built and finished, by no power and strength of men, but by the grace of God. Look the verse preceding the text, and ye will find it thus, ‘Not by might or by power, but by
‘my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts:’ ye may easily apply this. Our work that God is bringing up, and will finish, should be a praised work, our wishes should be to it: ‘The
‘Lord blefs thee, O habitation of justice, and
‘mountain of holiness.’ Our song of thanksgiving should be in our mouths, ‘God is
‘good, and his mercy endureth forever.’—
Albeit it go up, let us not ascribe any thing to ourselves, but let us ascribe all to the grace of God; and this will stop all the mouths of disdainers, who say, ‘Who are ye, who think to finish such a work?’ We answer, ‘It will
‘be finished, not by might, or by strength of
‘man, but by the Spirit of the Lord of hosts.’

There are three sorts looking to this work, and to the going up of it: 1. Evil-willers. 2. Well-wishers. 3. Neutrals. 1. The evil-willers are Edom; and he was Jacob’s brother; yet in Psalm cxxxvii. he cries, ‘raze, raze
‘this work to the foundation.’ There is a number that is crying, raze, raze this work to the foundation. 2. There is a second sort that are well-wishers, crying, grace, grace be unto it. In those former years, the shout of raze, raze, hath been louder than grace,

grace; but now, God be praised, the shout of grace, grace, is louder than raze, raze. 3. There is a third sort gazing upon this work, who dare not cry, raze, raze, because they are borne down with grace, grace; they dare not cry grace, grace, for fear of authority. What shall I say to these neutrals? They are so incapable of admonition, that it will be a spending of time, to crave their concurrence to the work. To whom shall I speak then? My text is an apostrophe, if I may use one, that which I shall use first, is God's own words from Isaiah, Isa. i. 2. 'Hear, O heavens, hearken, O earth, for the Lord hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me.'

I will next turn me to strangers and foreigners. All ye of reformed kirks (What! have I said strangers? These men who are brought up in the kirk, are strangers from the womb; Psalm lviii. 3. But) ye are joined with us in a corporation; come therefore with your fellow-feeling, let us hear your shouts and cries of grace, grace, be unto the Kirk of Scotland; and let your wishes condemn these ungrateful neutrals, who profess themselves children of this kirk, and yet will not rejoice with us for the good of our mother.

Now ye have heard this text in all these six steps. 1. A mountain seen. 2. A mountain reproved and disdained. 3. A mountain to be removed. 4. A growing work. 5. To be finished. 6. With great applause of all well-willers, wishing grace unto the work. And

seeing I have ado with this great mountain; both with mountains that impede this work, and all ranks of persons, removers of the work, I will direct my speech to these with the apostrophe in the text.

And first, To the mountains lying in the way of this reformation: I rank them in two sorts, viz. prelates, and upholders of prelates. O prelates, if I had hope to come speed with you, I would exhort you in the name of Christ, to lay down your worldly dignity, and help us to exalt the kirk of Christ: but I fear ye have hardened yourselves so against the truth, that nothing will prevail with you, except ye keep your worldly monarchy; yet ye shall be forced to take up my apostrophe, 'O mountains of Gilboa, 'on whom the anointed of the Lord is fallen, 'neither come dew nor rain upon you.' Ye are these mountains, upon whom Christ and his anointed have been slain; the dew nor rain of God's grace are not on you: ye may well receive fatness from beneath, to make you great in this world; but from above, ye are not bedewed with the grace of God, without which, whatever your bodies be, ye have clean souls. Under this curse I leave you, and turn to you, O great mountains; great men, who are putting your shoulders to hold up this mountain of prelacy; I beseech you, if ye have any love to Christ, to take your shoulders, and help from this pestiferous mountain, the wrack of Christ's kirk. And if exhortance will not prevail with you, I

charge you in the name of the great God, and his Son Jesus Christ, to whom one day ye must give your account, that ye in nowise underprop this mountain, the which if ye obey. I am sure the Lord will bless you, and your posterity; but if ye will not, though ye were never so high a mountain in this kingdom, ye shall become a plain. I hear one saying, 'minister, I am not not afraid for all 'thou sayest; my mountain is strong enough.' And so said David, Psalm xxx. 6, 7. 'I said, 'shall never be moved, for thou hast made 'my mountain strong, thou hides thy face, 'and I was troubled.' I will tell you, let your mountain be never so strong, if God hide his face once, he will make the tallest mountain of you tremble; and if that move you not, he will at last lay you waste. I come to you, whose hearts God hath touched to promote this work in general; Christ is saying to you that word in Cant. iv. 8. 'Come with me from Lebanon, my spouse, come with me 'from Lebanon, look from the top of Amana, 'from the top of Shenir and Hermon, from the 'lions dens, and mountains of leopards. Thou 'hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse, 'thou hast ravished my heart with one of thy 'eyes.' Christ says this to you, Come from from the dens of lions, and mountains of leopards: lions are cruel, and leopards are crafty and cruel; for it is reported of them, that they set themselves in the thick branches, and spy the passengers coming by, and leap between their shoulders, and kill

them. Ye have been over long among the lions dens, and the mountains of leopards and now ye are coming away; this same look hath ravished the heart of Christ; ye have wounded him with this look ye have given to the cause: continue your help until the spouse of Christ be forced from the lions dens, and mountains of leopards.

In particular, I speak to all ranks of persons. O noblemen, who are the high mountains of this kingdom, bow your tops, and look on the kirk of Christ, lying in the vallies, fighting, groaning, fswounding and looking towards you with pitiful looks: if the Sun of Righteousness hath shined on you, let her have a shadow, as ye would have God to be a shadow to you in the day of your distress.

Barons and gentlemen, who are as the pleasant hills coming from the mountains (I speak to you for the relation that is betwixt you and the mountains, for by your descent ye are hewn out of the mountains) my heart is glad to see you lift your tops, as the palms of your hands reached to the mountains, that they and ye may be as a shelter for the kirk of Christ. I pray you separate not your hands from theirs, till our work be brought forth with shouting.

Burrows, who are as the vallies whom God hath blessed with the fatness of the earth, and the merchandise of the sea; the mountains and hills are looking to you, and ye to them: join yourselves in an unseparable union, and compass the vineyard of Christ;

to her a wall of defence, lest the wild beasts of the wood waste it, and the wild beasts of the forest devour it, Psalm lxxx. 13.

Ministers, and my faithful brethren in Christ, whose feet are beautiful upon the mountains, say unto Zion, 'Behold thy God cometh.' I tell you, within these two years, an honest man's feet were not beautiful upon the streets of Edinburgh. We might have gone home to our houses again, and shaken the dust off our feet for a conviction against this unthankful generation; but now (God be praised) they are beautiful, and we are comely in their eyes, not for any thing in us, for we lay all down at the feet of Christ; but because we are gone up upon mount Zion, and as the Lord's messengers, have cried, 'Behold thy God cometh.' I pray you, if ye have any love to the kirk of Christ, withdraw both your tongues and pens from this mountain, and apply them against it; apply your wits, engines, spirits, and all your strength to beat down this mountain; yea, tread upon it, and use the sharp threshing instruments which God hath put into your hands, and thresh upon that mountain, till it be beaten small as the chaff.

Shall I pass you that are commons? Truly my delight hath not been so great upon this mountain, as to make me overlook you. My good people, beloved in Christ, have ye nothing to contribute for this work? Have ye not so much power as the mountains and hills have? Or, have ye not such substance as

the vallies? Yet something ye have, give it and it will be acceptable, something against the mountain, and something for the work. If ye have no more against the mountain, let me have your tears, prayers, and strong cries. I am sure there is as great value in them, as in the rams horns that blew down Jericho. Send up your prayers, and cry with the Psalmist, in Psalm cxliv. 5. ‘Bow thy heavens, O Lord, and come down, touch the mountains, and they shall smoke; cast forth lightning, and scatter them; shoot out thine arrows, and destroy them; send thine hand from above, and deliver me out of the great waters, from the hand of strange children, whose mouth speaketh vanity, their right hand is a right hand of falsehood.’ As ye have your tears and prayers against this mountain, lend me also what ye have for the going up of this work: if ye have no more, let us have your shouts and hearty crying, ‘grace, grace be unto it.’ Time will not suffer me to speak any more, yet time shall never bereave you nor me neither of this.—Let us all resolve so long as our life is in, even to the last gasp, as God will help us, that this shall be our last cry, Grace, grace be unto this work of reformation in the kirk of Scotland.

To this grace I recommend you, and close with that wish of the apostles in the New Testament. *The grace of God be with you all.* Amen.

A C T
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE
CHURCH OF SCOTLAND,
APPROVING OF THE
SOLEMN LEAGUE AND COVENANT.

At Edinburgh, August 17th, 1643. Sess. 14.

THE Assembly having recommended unto a committee, appointed by them to join with the committee of the honourable convention of estates, and the commissioners of the honourable houses of the parliament of England, for bringing the kingdoms to a more near conjunction and union, received from the aforesaid committees the covenant after-mentioned, as the result of their consultations: and having taken the same, as a matter of so public concernment and of so deep importance doth require, unto their gravest consideration, did with all their hearts, and with the beginnings of the feel-

ings of that joy, which they did find in so great measure upon the renovation of the National Covenant of this kirk and kingdom, all with one voice approve and embrace the same, as the most powerful mean, by the blessing of God, for the settling and preserving the true protestant religion, with perfect peace in his majesty's dominions, and propagating the same to other nations, and for establishing his majesty's throne to all ages and generations. And therefore, with their best affections, recommended the same to the Hon. Convention of Estates, that being examined and approved by them, it may be sent with all diligence to the kingdom of England, that being received and approved there, the same may be, with public humiliation, and all religious and answerable solemnity, sworn and subscribed by all true professors of the reformed religion, and all his majesty's good subjects in both kingdoms.

A. JOHNSTON.

TWO SPEECHES

DELIVERED BEFORE THE SUBSCRIBING OF THE

SOLEMN LEAGUE

AND

COVENANT

OF THE THREE KINGDOMS OF

Scotland, England & Ireland,

AT

ST. MARGARET'S IN WESTMINSTER,

SEPTEMBER THE 25TH, 1643.

The one by MR. PHILIP NYE, the other by MR.
ALEXANDER HENDERSON, both members of the
Westminster Assembly of Divines.

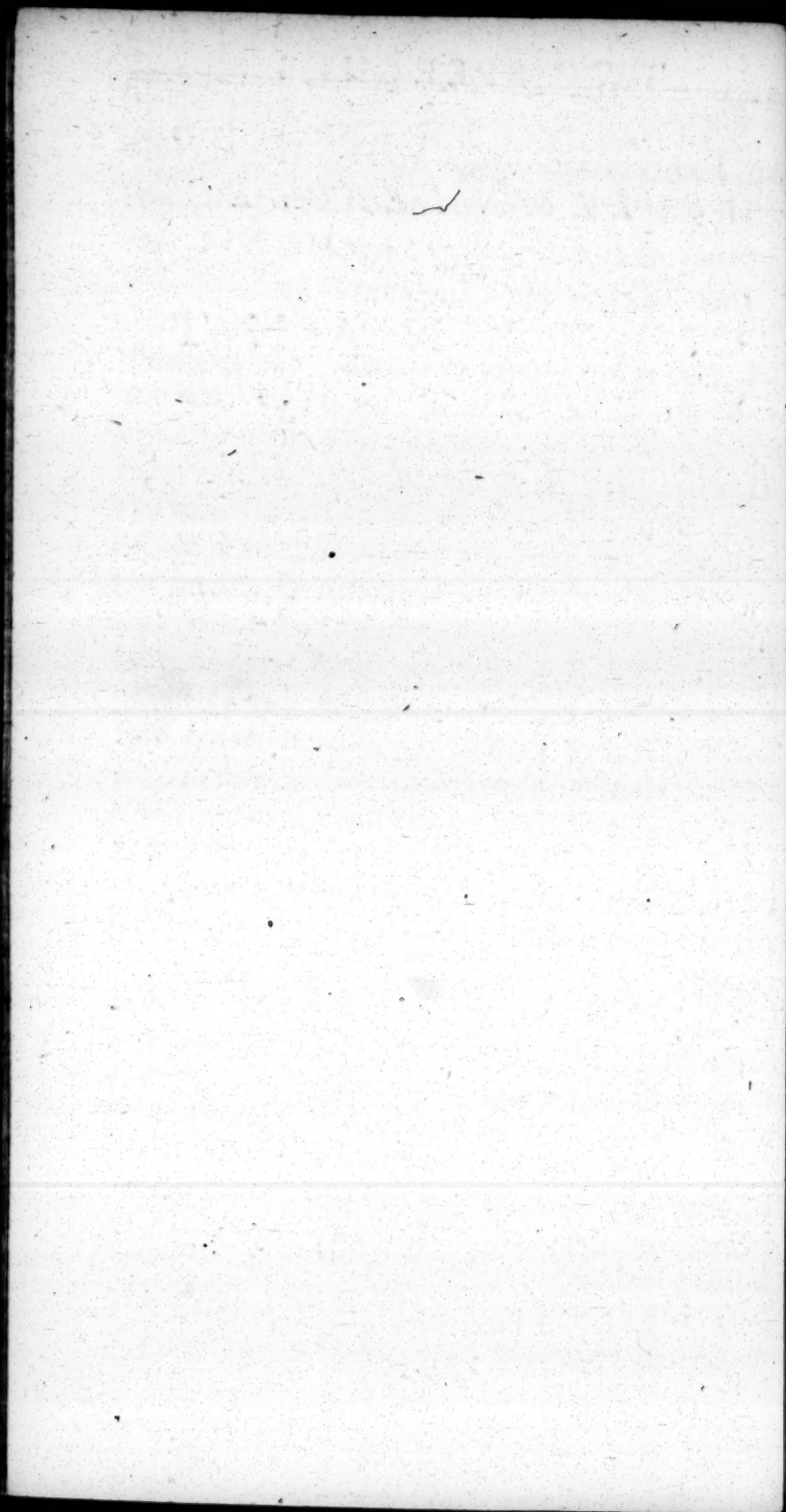
Published by special order of the House of Commons.

2 CHRON. XV. 15. *All Judah rejoiced at the oath; for they had sworn with all their heart, and fought him with their whole desire, and he was found of them.*

GLASGOW:

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1799.



An Exhortation made to the Honourable
House of Commons, and Reverend Di-
vines of the Assembly, by Mr. NYE, be-
fore he read the Covenant.

A Great and solemn work (Honourable
and Reverend) this day is put into our
hands; let us stir up and awaken our hearts
unto it. We deal with God as well as with
men, and with God in his greatness and ex-
cellency, for by him we swear; and at the
same time we have to do with God and his
goodness, who now reacheth out unto us a
strong and seasonable arm of assistance. The
goodness of God procuring succour and help
to a sinful and afflicted people (such are we)
ought to be matter of fear and trembling, e-
ven to all that hear of it; Jer. xxxiii. 9. We
are to exalt and acknowledge him this day,
who is fearful in praises, swear by that name
which is holy and reverend, enter into a co-
venant and league, that is never to be forgot-
ten by us nor our posterity, and the fruit I
hope of it shall be so great, as both we and
they shall have cause to remember it with joy;
and such an oath as for matter, persons, and
other circumstances, the like hath not been
in any age or oath we read of in sacred or
human history, yet sufficiently warranted in
both.

The parties engaging in this league, are
three kingdoms, famous for the knowledge,

and acknowledgment of Christ above all the kingdoms in the world; to swear before such a presence, should mould the spirit of man into a great deal of reverence. What then to be engaged, to be incorporated, and that by sacred oath, with such an high and honourable fraternity? An oath is to be esteemed so much the more solemn, by how much greater the persons are that swear each to other; so in this business, where kingdoms swear mutually.

And as the solemnity of an oath is to be measured by the persons swearing, so by the matter also that is to be sworn to. God would not swear to the Covenant of Works, he intended not to honour it so much, it was not to continue, it was not worthy of an oath of his; but to the Covenant of Grace, which is the gospel, he swears, and repents not of it. God swears for the salvation of men, and of kingdoms: and if kingdoms swear, what subject of an oath becometh them better than the preservation and salvation of kingdoms, by establishing the kingdom of a Saviour amongst them, even our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who is a Mediator and Saviour for nations as well as particular persons?

The end also is great and honourable, as either of the former: 'Two are better than one,' saith he, who knoweth what is best, and from whom alone every thing hath the goodness it hath. Association is of divine offspring; not only the being of creatures, but the putting of them together. The cluster as

well as the grape is the work of God. Consort and harmony amongst men, especially amongst saints, is very pleasing unto the Lord: If, when but two or three agree and assent upon any thing on earth, it shall be confirmed in heaven, and for this, because they gather together in his name; much more when two or three kingdoms shall meet, and consent together in 'his name, and for his name, that God may 'be one, and his name one amongst them,' and his presence amidst them. That prayer of Christ seemeth to proceed from a feeling sense of his own blessedness, 'Father, that 'they may be one, as thou in me,' &c. Unity among his churches and children must needs therefore be very acceptable unto him: for out of the more deep sense, desires are fetcht from within us, the more pleasing will be the answer of them unto us. Churches and kingdoms are near to God, his patience towards them, his compassions over them more than particular persons sheweth it plainly. But kingdoms willingly engaging themselves for his kingdom, his Christ, his saints, the purity of religion, his worship and government, in all particulars, and in all humility sitting down at his feet to receive the law, and the rule from his mouth: what a price doth he set upon such? Especially, when (as we this day) sensible of our infirmity, and of an unfaithful heart not steady with our God, but apt to start from the cause, if we feel the knife or the fire; who bind ourselves with cords, as a sacrifice to the horns of the altar; we in-

vocate the name of the great God, that his vows, yea, his curse may be upon us, if we do not this; yea, though we suffer for so doing, that is, if we endeavour not so far as the Lord shall assist us by his grace, to advance the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ here upon earth, and make Jerusalem once more the praise of the whole world, notwithstanding all the contradictions of men.

What is this but the contents and matter of our oath? What do we covenant? What do we vow? Is it not the preservation of religion, where it is reformed, and the reformation of religion, where it needs? Is not the reformation of three kingdoms, and a reformation universal, in doctrine, discipline, and worship, in whatsoever the word shall discover unto us? To practise is a fruit of love; to reform, a fruit of zeal; but so to reform, will be a token of great prudence and circumspection in each of these churches: and all this to be done according to God's word, the best rule, and according to the best reformed churches, and best interpreters of this rule. If England hath obtained to any greater perfection in so handling the word of righteousness, and truths that are according to godliness, as to make men more godly, more righteous: and, if in the churches of Scotland any more light and beauty in matters of order and discipline, by which their assemblies are more orderly: or, if to any other church or person, it hath been given better to have learned Christ in any of his ways,

than any of us, we shall humbly bow, and kiss their lips that can speak right words unto us, in this matter, and help us into the nearest uniformity with the word and mind of Christ in this great work of reformation.

Honourable and reverend brethren, there cannot be a more direct and effectual way to exhort and persuade the wise, and men of sad and serious spirits (and such are you to whom I am commanded to speak this day) than to let into their understandings the weight, and worth, and great importance of the work, they are persuaded unto. This oath is such, and in the matter and consequence of it, of such concernment, as I can truly say, It is worthy of us; yea, of all these kingdoms; yea, of all the kingdoms of the world; for it is swearing fealty and allegiance unto Christ, the King of kings; and giving up of all these kingdoms which are in his inheritance, to be subdued more to his throne, and ruled more by his sceptre, upon whose shoulders the government is laid, and 'in the increase of whose government and peace there shall be no end,' Isa. ix. Yea, we find this very thing in the utmost accomplishment of it, to have been the oath of the greatest angel that ever was, who setting his feet upon two of God's kingdoms, the one upon the sea, the other upon the earth, lifting up his hand to heaven, as you are to do this day, and so swearing, Rev. x. The effect of that oath you shall find to be this, 'That the kingdoms of the world, become the kingdoms

‘ of the Lord and his Christ, and he shall
‘ reign forever,’ Rev. xi. His oath was for
the full and final accomplishment, this of
yours for a gradual, yet a great performance
towards it.

That which the apostles and primitive
times did so much and so long pray for, tho
never long with much quietness enjoyed; that
which our fathers in these latter times have
fasted, prayed and mourned after, yet attain
ed not; even the cause which many dear
saints now with God, have furthered by ex
tremest sufferings, poverty, imprisonment,
banishment, death, even ever since the first
dawning of reformation: that and the very
same is the very cause and work that we
are come now, through the mercy of Jesus
Christ, not only to pray for, but swear to
And surely it can be no other, but the result
and answer of such prayers and tears, of such
sincerity and sufferings, that three kingdoms
should be thus born, or rather new-born in a
day; that these kingdoms should be wrought
about to so great an engagement, than which
nothing is higher. For this end kings reign
kingdoms stand, and states are upheld.

It is a special grace and favour of God un
to you, brethren (Reverend and Honourable
to vouchsafe you the opportunity, and to put
into your hearts, as this day, to engage your
lives and estates in matters so much concern
ing him and his glory. And if you should
do no more, but lay a foundation stone in this
great work, and by so doing, engage poster

ity after you to finish it, it were honour enough: but there may yet further use be made of you, who now are to take this oath. You are designed as chief master-builders, and choice instruments for the effecting of this settled peace and reformation; which, if the Lord shall please to finish in your hands, a 'greater happiness on earth, nor a greater means to augment your glory and crown in heaven, you are not capable of.' And this, let me further add for your encouragement, of what extensive good, and fruit in the success of it, this very oath may prove to be, we know not. God hath set his covenant like the heavens, not only for duration, but like also for extension. The heavens move and roll about, and so communicate their light, and heat, and virtue, to all places and parts of the earth; so doth the covenant of God; so may this gift be given to other covenants, that are framed to that pattern.—How much this solemn league and oath may provoke other reformed churches to a further reformation of themselves; what light and heat it may communicate abroad to other parts of the world, it is only in him to define, to whom is given the utmost 'ends of 'the earth for his inheritance,' and 'worketh by his exceeding great power, great 'things out of small beginnings.'

But however, this I am sure of, it is a way in all probability most likely to enable us to preserve and defend our religion against our common enemies; and possible a more sure

foundation this day will be laid for ruining popery and prelacy, the chief of them, than as yet hath been led unto in any age.

For popery, it hath been a religion ever dexterous in fencing and mountain itself by association and joint strength. All sorts of professors amongst them are cast into fraternities and brother-hoods; and these orders carefully united by vow one with another, and under some more general notion of common dependence. Such states also and kingdoms, as they have thus made theirs, they endeavour to improve and secure by strict combinations and leagues each to other; witness of late years, that *la sainte ligue*, the holy league. It will not be unworthy your consideration, whether, seeing the preservation of popery hath been by leagues and covenant, God may not make a league or covenant to be the destruction of it. Nay, the very rise of popery seemeth to be after such a manner, by kings, that is kingdoms assenting and agreeing perhaps by some joint covenant (the text saith, 'with one mind,' why not then with one mouth) to give this power and strength unto the beast, and make war against the Lamb, Rev. xvii. Where you read, 'the Lamb shall overcome the beast,' and possibly with the same weapons. He is the Lord of lords, and King of kings, he can unite kings and kingdoms, and give them one mind also to destroy the whore, and be her utter ruin. And may not this day's

work be a happy beginning of such a blessed expedition?

Prelacy, another common enemy, that we covenant and swear against. What hath been, or what hath the strength of it been, but a subtile combination of clergymen, formed into a policy or body of their own invention, framing themselves into subordination and dependance one upon another; so that the interest of each is improved by all, and a great power by this means acquired to themselves, as by sad experience we have lately found. The joints and members of this body, you know, were knit together by the sacred engagement of an oath, the *Oath of Obedience*, as they called it. Y^e also, with what cunning industry they endeavoured lately, to make this oath and covenant more sure for themselves and their posterity, and intended a more public, solemn and universal engagement, than since Popery, this cause of theirs, was ever maintained or supported by: and questionless, Ireland and Scotland also, must at last have been brought into this holy league with England. But blessed be the Lord, and blessed be his good hand the parliament, that from the indignation of their spirits against so horrid a yoke, have dashed out the very brains of this project, and are now this day present before the Lord, to take and give possession of this blessed ordinance, even an oath and covenant, as solemn, and of as large extent, as they intended theirs; uniting these three kingdoms

into such a league and happy combination, as will doubtless preserve us and our reformation against them, though their iniquity, in the mysteries of it, should still be working amongst us. Come, therefore (I speak in the words of the prophet) 'let us join ourselves to the Lord,' and one to another, and each to all, 'in a perpetual covenant, that shall not be forgotten.'

We are now entering upon a work of the greatest moment and concernment to us, and to our posterity after us, that ever was undertaken by any of us, or any of our forefathers, or us, or neighbouring nations. The Lord shall bless this our work, and it will be a happy day, and we shall be happy people. An oath is a duty of the first commandment, and therefore of the highest and noblest order and rank of duties, therefore must come forth attended with choicest graces, especially with these two, humility and fear.

Fear, not only of God, which ought to be in an eminent measure: Gen. xxxi. 53. Jacob swore by the fear of his father Isaac, as if he coveted to inherit his father's grace, as well as his father's God: but also, fear of an oath, it being a dreadful duty, and hath this peculiar, it is established by the oath of God, 'I have sworn, that unto me every tongue shall swear,' Isaiah xlv. 23. It is made the very character of a saint, he fears an oath, Ecc. ix. 2.

Humility is another grace requisite. Set

your hearts before God in an humble obedient frame; Deut. ix. 'Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and serve him, and swear by his name.' The apostle Paul was sensible of this engagement, even in the very act of this duty; Rom. i. 9. 'I call God to witness, whom I serve in my spirit:' although it be a work of the lips, yet the heart, and the whole man must be interested, if we expect this worship to be acceptable: Psalm cxix. 108. 'Accept the free-will offering of my mouth, and teach me thy judgments.'

Also it must be done in the simplicity and plainness of spirit, and those with whom we covenant as a witness betwixt us, who are in the heart: 'With him is wisdom and strength, the deceived and deceiver is his, Job xii. 16. He hath wisdom to discover, and strength to punish, if our hearts be not upright to our brethren in this matter. Let us be contented with this, that the words of our covenant be bands, it may not be so much as in the desire of our hearts, that they should become snares, no not to the weakest and simplest person that joineth with us. On the whole work make your address unto God, as Jacob did to his Father Isaac, and let there be the like fear and jealousy over your spirits; Gen. xxvii. 12. 'My father peradventure will feel me, and I shall seem to him as a deceiver, and I shall bring a curse upon me, and not a blessing.'

I take liberty with more earnestness to

press this care upon you, because I have observed, oaths and covenants have been undertaken by us formerly, and by the command of authority, the fruit whereof, though great, yet answered not our expectation; the Lord surely hath been displeased with the slowness of our hearts in the work. I beseech you be more watchful, and stir up your hearts with more industry this day than ever before. As it is the last oath you are likely to take in this kind, so is it our last refuge, *Tabula post naufragium*. If this help us not, we are likely to be at our dying day, an unhappy one otherwise, 'You will indeed stir up your hearts, and seek the Lord, and ye shall desire, God will be found, and give you rest roundabout, 2 Chron. xv. 15.

And having sworn, and entered into this solemn engagement to God and man, make conscience to do accordingly; otherwise it is better thou shouldst not vow: Eccl. v. As is said of fasting, 'It is not the bowing down of the head for a day;' so of this solemn swearing, It is not the lifting up of the hand for a day, but an honest and faithful endeavouring after the contents of this covenant, all our days. A truce-breaker is reckoned up amongst the vilest of Christians, 2 Tim. iii. 3. so a covenant-breaker is listed amongst the worst of heathens, Rom. i. 31. But he that sweareth, and changeth not, tho' he swear to his hurt, that is, he that will keep his covenant and oath, tho' the contents of it prove not for him, nay possibly against him, yet he will

keep it for his oath's sake, such an one 'shall have his habitation with the most High, and dwell in his tabernacle,' Psalm xv. And as for you, reverend brethren, that are ministers of the gospel, there is yet another obligation will lie upon you: let us look to ourselves, and make provision to walk answerable to this our covenant, for the gospel's sake: it will reflect a great aspersions upon the truth of the gospel, if we should be false or unconstant in any word or purpose, tho' in a matter of less consequence, as you can easily collect from that apology of Paul, 2 Cor. i. 17, 18. How much more in such a case should we be found to purpose, and covenant, and swear, and bring unto the flesh, and with be, notwithstanding all these obligations, yea, yea, and nay, nay.

That we may all, who take the covenant this day, be constant, immoveable, and abound in this work of the Lord, that we may not start aside, or give back, or go on uncomfortably, there is a twofold grace or qualification to be laboured after.

1. We must get courage, spirits that are bold and resolute. It is said in Haggai, that 'the Lord stirred up the Spirit of Zerubbabel 'governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua 'the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people, and they came, and did 'work in the house of the Lord.' The work of God's house, reformation-work especially, is a stirring work: read stories, you find not

any where, reformation made in any age, either in doctrine or discipline, without great stir and opposition. This was foretold by the same prophet, chap. ii. ver. 7. the promise is, 'He will fill his house with glory.' But what goeth before, ver. 6. 'Yet once it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land,' that is, all nations, as in the words following. This place is applied, Heb. xii. to the removing Jewish rites, the moveables of God's house. The like you find in the apostles times, Acts xvii. the truth being preached, some believed, and some not. Here beginneth the stir, that which that believed not, 'took unto themselves' in lewd fellows of the baser sort, gathered a company, and set all the city on uproar; and when they had done so, complained of the brethren to the rulers, as men that turn the world upside down, ver. 6. read also Acts xxi. 27, 30. 31. In such a work therefore, men had need be of stout, resolute and composed spirits, that we may be able to go on in the main, and stir in the midst of such stirs; and not be amazed at any such doings. It may possibly happen, that even amongst yourselves, there will be outcries: Sir, you will undo all, saith one; You will put all into confusion, saith another; If you take this course, saith a third, we can expect nothing but blood. But a wise statesman, like an experienced seaman, knoweth the compass of his vessel, and tho' it heave, toss, and the passengers cry out about him,

yet in the midst of all, he is himself, turneth not aside from his work, but steereth on his course. I beseech you, let it be seriously considered, if you mean to do any such work in the house of God, as this is; if you mean to pluck up what many years ago was planted, or to build up what so long ago was pulled down, and to go thro' with this work, and not be discouraged, you must beg of the Lord this excellent spirit, this resolute stirring spirit, otherwise you will be outspirited, and both you and your cause slighted and dishonoured.

2. On the other hand, we must have for humility, prudence, gentleness. A man may be very zealous, yet very meek and merciful. As a Lion, and yet a Lamb also; as he telleth them, he cometh to send them on the 'earth:' and in another place, rebuketh his disciples 'for their fiery spirits,' Luke ix. 59. There was the like composition in Moses, and in Paul; and it is of great use, especially in this work of reformation. I have not observed any disputes carried on with more bitterness in mens writings, and with a more un sanctified heat of spirit, yea, and by godly men too, than in controversies about discipline, church government, ceremonies, and the like. Surely, to argue about government with such ungoverned passions, to argue for reformation with a spirit so unreformed, is very uncomely. Let us be zealous, as Christ was, to cast out all, to extirpate and root out

every plant his heavenly Father hath not planted; and yet let us do it in an orderly way, and with the Spirit of Christ, whose servants we are. 'The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle to all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose,' 2 Tim. ii. 24, 25. We solemnly engage this day our utmost endeavours for reformation; let us remember this, That too much heat, as well as to much coldness, may harden men in their ways, and hinder reformation.

Brethren, let us come to this blessed work of heart, with such a mind with such resolutions for the us not be wanting to the hath put into our hands then I can promise you, as the Consider this day and upwards, 'even from this day, that the foundation of the Lord's work is laid, consider it, from this day will I bless you saith the Lord.' Nay, we have received, as it were, the first fruits of this promise; for as it is said of some mens 'good works, they are manifest before hand,' 1 Tim. v. Even so may be said of the good work of this day, it is manifested before hand. God hath, as it were before hand, testified his acceptance; while we were thinking and purposing this free-will offering, he was protecting and defending our army, causing our enemies, the enemies of this work to flee before us, and gave us a victory, not to be despised. Surely this

ath and covenant shall be Judah's joy, the
oy and comfort of this whole kingdom, yea,
f all the three kingdoms.

Jesus Christ, king of the saints govern us
y his Spirit, strengthen us by his power,
ndertake for us according as he hath sworn,
ven the 'oath which he sware to our father
Abraham, that he would grant unto us, that
we being delivered out of the hands of our
enemies, might serve him without fear, in
holiness and righteousness before him all
the days of our life.' Luke i. Grant unto
s also, that when this life is finished, and
ve gathered to our fathers, there may be a
eneration out of our loins to stand upon
his cause, that his great and revered name
may be exalted from one generation to ano-
her, until he himself shall come, and perfect
ll with his own wisdom: even so come Lord
esus, come quickly. Amen.

A speech delivered by Mr. ALEXANDER
HENDERSON, immediately before the taking
ing of the Covenant by the House of Commons,
mons, and Assembly of Divines.

ALTHOUGH the time be far spent, yet
am I bold (honourable, reverend, and
beloved in the Lord) to crave your patience
a little. It were both sin and shame to us in
this so acceptable a time in this day, which
the Lord hath made, to be silent, and to say
nothing. If we should hold our peace, we
could neither be answerable to God, whose
cause and work is in hand, nor of this church
and kingdom, unto which we have made so
large profession of duty, and owe much more
nor to our native kingdom, so abundant in
affection towards you; nor to our own hearts,
which exceedingly rejoice to see this day.
We have greater reason than the leperous
men sitting in a time of great extremity at
the gates of Samaria, to say one to another,
'We do not well, this day is a day of good
'tidings, and we hold our peace.' It is true,
the Syrians are not yet fled; but our hope is
through God, that the work begun this day,
being sincerely performed, and faithfully
pursued, shall put to flight, not only the
Syrians and Babylonians, but all other ene-
mies of the church of God, of the king's
honour, and of our liberty and peace.

For it is acceptable to God, and well pleasing in his sight, when his people come willingly in the day of his power (and how shall they not be willing in the day of his power?) to enter into a religious covenant with him, and amongst themselves, whatsoever be the condition of the people of God, whether in sorrow and humiliation before deliverance, or in rejoicing and thanksgiving after deliverance. This is it which the Lord waits for at their hands, which they have been used to perform, and with which he hath been so well pleased, that it hath been the fountain of many deliverances and blessings unto them. When a people begin to forget God, he lifteth up his hand against them, and smiteth them: and when his people humbled before him, lift up their hands, not only in supplication, but in covenant before the most high God, he is pleased (such is his mercy and wonderful compassion) first, to lift his hand unto them, saying, 'I am the Lord your God;' as we have it three times in two verses of the 20th of Ezekiel: and next he stretcheth out his hand against his enemies and theirs. It is the best work of faith, to join in covenant with God, the best work of love and Christian communion, to join in covenant with the people of God; the best work of the best zeal, to join in covenant for reformation, against the enemies of God and religion; the best work of true loyalty, to join in covenant for the preservation of our king and superiors; and the

best proof of natural affection, (and to be without natural affection, is one of the great sins of the Gentiles) to join in covenant for the defence of our native country, liberties and laws: such, as from these necessary ends do withdraw, and are not willing to enter into the covenant, have reason to enter into their own hearts, and to look into their faith, love, zeal, loyalty, and natural affection.

As it is acceptable to God, so have we for it the precedent and example, not only of the people of God of old, of the reformed churches of Germany, and the low countries, but of our own noble and Christian progenitors in the time of the danger of religion, which is expressed in the covenant itself. The defect was, they went not on thoroughly to enter in a solemn covenant, an happiness reserved for this time; which had they done the corruptions and calamities of these days might have been prevented. And if the Lord shall be pleased to move, loose and enlarge the hearts of his people in his majesty's dominions to take this covenant, not in simulation, nor in luke-warmness, as those that are almost persuaded to be Christians, but as becometh the people of God, it shall be the prevention of many evils and miseries, and a mean of many and rich blessings, spiritual and temporal to ourselves, our little ones, and the posterity that shall come after us, for many generations.

The near and neighbouring example of the church and kingdom of Scotland, is in

is case worthy of our best observation: When the prelates there, were grown by their rents, and lordly dignities, by their exorbitant power over all sorts of his majesty's subjects, ministers and others, by their places in parliament, council, college of justice, exchequer, and high commission, to a monstrous dominion and greatness, and like giants, setting their one foot on the neck of the church, and the other on the neck of the state, were become intollerably insolent. And when the people of God, through their oppression in religion, liberties and laws, and that was dearest unto them, were brought so low, that they chused rather to die, than to live in such slavery, or to live in any other place; rather than in their own native country: then did the Lord say, 'I have seen, I have seen the affliction of my people, and I have heard their groaning, and am come down to deliver them.' The beginnings were small, and contemptible in the eyes of the presumptuous enemies, such as used to see the beginnings of the greatest works of God; but were so seconded, and continually followed by the undeniable evidences of divine providence, leading them forward from one step to another, that their mountain became strong in the end. No tongue can tell what motions filled the hearts, what tears were poured forth from the eyes, and what cries came from the mouths of many thousands in that land, when they found an unwonted flame warming their breasts, and

perceived the power of God, raiſing them from the dead, and creating for them a new world, wherein ſhall dwell religion and righteouſneſs. When they were deſtitute both of monies and munition, which next unto the ſpirit and arms of men, are the ſinews of war, the Lord brought them forth out of his hid treaſures, which was wonderful in their eyes, and matter of aſtoniſhment to their hearts: when they were many times at a pauſe in their deliberations, and brought to ſuch perplexity, that they knew not what to chuſe, or to do for proſecuting the work of God, only their eyes were towards him: not only the fears and furies, but the plots alſo, and policies of the adverſaries, opened the way unto them, their devices were turned upon their own heads, and ſerved for the promoting of the work of God. The purity of their intentions elevated above baſe and earthly reſpects, and the conſtant peace of their hearts in the miſt of many dangers, did bear them out againſt the malicious accuſations and aſperſions put upon their actions: all which, were ſenſible impreſſions of the good providence of God, and legible characters of his work; which as the church and kingdom of England exerciſed at this time with greater difficulty than theirs, have in part already found; ſo ſhall the parallel be perfected to their greater comfort in the faithful purſuing of the work unto the end.

Neceſſity, which hath in it a kind of ſovereignty, and is a law above all laws, and

therefore is said to have no law, doth mightily press the church and kingdom of Scotland at this time. It is no small comfort unto them, that they have not been idle, and at ease, but have used all good and lawful means of supplications, declarations and remonstrances to his majesty, for quenching the combustion in this kingdom: and after all these, that they sent commissioners to his majesty, humbly to mediate for a reconciliation and pacification. But the offer of their humble service was rejected from no other reason, but that they had no warrant nor capacity for such a mediation; and that the intermixture of the government of the church of England, with the civil government of the kingdom, was such a mystery as could not be understood by them. Although it be true, which was at that time often replied, that the eight demand of the treaty, and the answer given thereunto, concerning the uniformity of religion, was a sufficient ground of capacity; and the proceedings of the houses of parliament against episcopal government, as a stumbling block hindering reformation, and as a prejudice to the civil state, was ground enough for their information. The commissioners having returned from his majesty without success, and the miseries of Ireland, and the distresses of England, and the dangers and pressures of the kingdom of Scotland, growing to greater extremity; such as were intrusted with the public affairs of the kingdom, were

necessitate, according to the practice of former times, his majesty having denied a parliament, to call a convention of the estates, for considering of the present affairs, and for providing the best remedies: which immediately upon their meeting, by the special providence of God, did receive information of divers treacherous attempts of papists, in all the three kingdoms, as if they had been called for that effect. And by the same providence, commissioners were sent from both houses of parliament, to consider with the estates of the kingdom of Scotland, of such articles and propositions, as might make the conjunction betwixt the two nations, more beneficial and effectual for the securing of religion and liberty against papists and prelates, with their adherents. Their consultations with the commissioners of the General Assembly did in the end bring forth a covenant, as the only mean after all other have been essayed, for the deliverance of England and Ireland out of the depths of affliction, preservation of the church and kingdom of Scotland from the extremity of misery, and the safety of our native king and his kingdoms, from destruction and desolation. This is the manifold necessity, which nature, religion, loyalty and love hath laid upon them.

Nor is it unknown in this honourable, reverend and wise audience, what errors and heresies in doctrine, what superstition and idolatry in worship, what usurpation and

tyranny in government, what cruelty against the souls and bodies of the saints have been set on foot, exercised and executed for many generations, and now of late by the Roman church: all which we hope, through the blessing of God upon this work, shall be brought to an end. Had the Pope at Rome the knowledge of what is doing this day in England, and were this covenant written on the plaister of the wall over against him, where he sitteth, Belshazzar-like in his sacrilegious pomp, it would make his heart to tremble, his countenance to change, his head and mitre to shake, his joints to loose, and all his cardinals and prelates to be astonished.

When the reformed churches, which by their letters have been exciting us to Christian communion and sympathy in this time of the danger of religion, and distress of the godly, shall hear of this blessed conjunction for uniformity in religion, according to the word of God, and the defence thereof, it shall quicken their hearts against the heaviness of oppressing sorrows and fears; and be no other than a beginning of a jubilee and joyful deliverance unto them, from the antichristian yoke and tyranny.

Upon these and the like considerations, we are very confident, that the church and kingdom of Scotland will most cheerfully join in this covenant; at the first motion whereof, their bowels were moved within them. And to give testimony of this our confidence,

we who are Commissioners from the General Assembly, although we have no particular and express commission for that end (not from want of willingness, but of foresight) offer to join our hearts and hands unto it, being assured, that the Lord in his own time will, against all opposition, even against the gates of hell, crown it with a blessing from heaven. The word of God is for it, as you have been now resolved by the consent and testimony of a reverend assembly of so many godly, learned and great divines. In your own sense and experience, you will find, that although, while you are assaulted or exercised with worldly cares and fears, your thoughts may somewhat trouble and divert you; yet at other times, when upon seeking of God in private or public, as in the evening of a well spent Sabbath, or day of fast and humiliation, your disposition is more spiritual, and leaving the world behind you, you have found access unto God through Jesus Christ; the bent and inclinations of your hearts will be strongest to go through with this work. It is a good testimony that our designs and ways are agreeable to the will of God, if we affect them most when our hearts are farthest from the world, and our temper is most spiritual and heavenly, and least carnal and earthly. As the word of God, so the prayers of the people of God in all the reformed churches, are for us and on our side. It were more terrible than an army, to hear that there were any fervent

supplications to God against us: blasphemies, curses, and horrid imprecations there be, proceeding from another spirit, and that is all. That divine providence also which hath maintained this cause, and supported his servants in a marvellous manner unto this day, and which this time past hath kept things in an equal balance, and vicissitude of success, will, we trust, from this day forth, through the weight of this covenant, cast the balance, and make religion and righteousness to prevail, to the glory of God, the honour of our king, the confusion of our common enemies, and the comfort and safety of the people of God: which may he grant, who is able to do above any thing that we can ask or think.

Die Sab. ult. Sept. 1643.

IT is this day ordered by the Commons' House of Parliament, That Colonel Long do give thanks to Mr. Coleman, for the great pains he took in a sermon, at St. Margaret's church in Westminster, upon the taking of the covenant: and that Mr. Coleman be desired to print his sermon; and is to have the same privilege, as other ministers have had: that none shall print or reprint his sermon, but such as he shall authorize thereunto.

H. ELSYNG, Cler. Parl. D. Com.

THE HEART'S ENGAGEMENT.

A
S E R M O N,

PREACHED AT
ST. MARGARET's, WESTMINSTER,

At the public entering into the

C O V E N A N T,

BY

- I. Some of the Nobility, Knighthood and Gentry.
- II. Divers Colonels, Officers and Soldiers.
- III. Those of the Scottish Nation about the City.
- IV. Many Reverend Divines here residing.

September 29th, Anno 1643.

By the Rev. Mr. THOMAS COLEMAN,
One of the Members of the Westminster Assembly of
Divines.

Preached and published according to the several orders
of the Honourable House of Commons.

NEH. x. 28, 29. *The people—entered into a curse, and
into an oath to walk in God's law, &c.*

GLASGOW:

PRINTED BY NAPIER AND KHULL,
FOR HUGH MONCRIEFF, THE PUBLISHER.

1799.

To

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To the Honourable Gentry of all sorts, the
Colonels, Officers and Soldiers, to our
dear brethren of the Scottish nation, and
the reverend Ministry of God's word, that
entered in a Solemn League and Covenant
with God, at St. Margaret's, Westminster;
September 29, 1643.

UPON the motion of some of you, and
the order of the honourable House, I
preached this sermon; upon the request of
divers, and a like order, I published it. My
aim is the same, as then, so now, that you
would go on in the might of this your oath,
and in the observance of it at all times. An
oath, if vain, makes the land to mourn; an
oath, if weighty, makes it to rejoice. This
is a new thing, and not done in our land
before; and I hope will have a new effect,
not seen by our people before. You rejoiced
in the oath at the taking; you shall rejoice
in the rest and peace that will follow. For
a further light, I have added a word or two
in the third head of the last part, satisfactory,
which time then permitted not; and it is but
a word. The day when this covenant was
subscribed, was a day of contentment and
joy. The honourable gentry accounted it
their freedom to be bound to God; the
brave men of war accounted it their courage,

to be pressed for this service; our brethren of Scotland esteemed it a happiness, and a further act of pacification; our reverend divines deserves not to be last, either in praise or performance. The work that day prospered in our hands. You desired a sermon out of piety, that the duty of that day might be sanctified with the word and prayer. The time for the preparing was so short, there could not be seen much of man: if the work in the delivery was useful, I hope, there appeared much of God; and then it is your duty to give him the glory, as to do you good was the hearty aim of

Your very faithful friend,

and servant in the gospel,

THOMAS COLEMAN.

October }
4th, 1643. }

A sermon preached at the taking the Covenant; September 29th, 1643.

Jerem. xxx. 21.—*For who is this, that engaged his heart to approach unto me, saith the Lord?*

TWO things in this clause cause some obscurity: *First*, The uncertainty of the subject. *Secondly*, The ambiguity of one phrase.

1. The uncertainty of the subject, or person of whom the prophet speaks here: whether of Christ, by way of prophecy, or of some particular person, by way of story, or indefinitely of every one, by way of duty.

2. The ambiguity of that phrase, engaged; which, according to the variety of its signification, is or may be variously rendered. * *He adorned his heart*; || *He applied his heart*; † *He directed his heart*; ‡ *He engaged his heart*.

Hereupon the sense becomes various.

1. Who is he, viz. Christ, hath appointed his heart? Can there be found a parallel to Christ in the world, that hath so given himself up to God? made him and his ways, his meat and drink, yea more than his ordinary food?

* *Kimchi* || *Hierom.* *Rob. Maur.* ‡ *Geneva.* † *Last translation.*

2. Who hath fitted and adorned his heart? Is there any that can adorn and prepare himself to approach unto God, without God?

3. To omit others of like nature: it may be true, that it is chiefly spoken of Christ: the titles in the beginning of the verse look this way; his noble One, his Ruler, but seeing Christ is the head of the body, and one with his body, it may secondarily, and by way of communication be also affirmed of his members; and to them we extend it.

The clause therefore seems dependent, and as it is applied to man, hath reference to that which is an act of God, and seems to be a reason thereof. 'I will cause him to draw nigh, and he then shall approach; for who is, that hath engaged his heart?' The force of which inference may look two ways.

1. Shewing the impossibility in man, to begin the action: 'I will cause him to draw nigh; for who is this, that hath engaged his heart?' Where is the man that can direct his heart, approach to me of himself, by his own power? Not any, not one: 'Without me you can do nothing.'

2. Approving the endeavour to continue. 'I will cause him to draw near, that he may approach, and stay with me: he doth his best according to his strength; 'he engageth his heart,' I will help on with the work; 'for who is this?' Oh this is an excellent one: there are not many so; that any, that this is so, is beyond expectation, worthy of com-

mendation. What an one is this? 'Who is 'it that hath engaged,' tied, bound his heart from starting aside like a broken bow, to approach to, and to continue with me, faith the Lord?

In the words (to proceed methodically and clearly) I offer the sum of my thoughts, to be considered under four general heads, or parts.

I. The opening of the phrases.

II. The propounding of the point.

III. The viewing of the duty.

IV. The encouragement to the practice.

In and through these we shall walk, as travellers, who speed their pace in those fields, which yield no novelties, no fruit, no delight, but where they meet with varieties to delight the senses, fruitful places, green pastures to refresh themselves and beasts, they rest themselves and bait: so in some of these we shall only take and offer a taste, on others insist, as God shall direct; wherein an engagement of the attentions in the handling to me, may through God's mercy, beget an engagement of the heart in the applying to God of them in order.

§ I. *The opening of the phrases.*

FOR the fuller understanding of the prophet's drift, three words or phrases in this short sentence are a little to be cleared; for it containeth three parts: 1. An action of piety. 2. The object of this action.

3. The enquiry into both: and each of these is expressed in so many several particles.

1. The action of piety, engaging the heart. The heart may prove loose and wandering without an engagement: the engagement may be hypocritical and sinister, if it be not of the heart; but the one implying stability, the other sincerity, both together compleat it as an action of piety.

2. The object of this action, to approach unto me. Sin may be the object pursued, and God may be beheld at a distance: in this, we do not approach, in that, we approach not to God; but either is needful. God abhors those that approach to sin: he minds not those that look to him at their distance: except then thou approach, and approach unto God, thy endeavour is either cold or cursed.

3. The enquiry into both, who is this, into the act of engagement, because it is not usual, into the part engaged, because it is subtle; and what we seldom see, or grounds edly suspect, we have cause to enquire after.

Of the first; engage the heart.

This engagement of the heart, is a degree of the heart's motion towards any object, good and bad; for it was an engagement, though a bad one when more than forty-men bound themselves with an oath from eating and drinking, till they had killed Paul. To this degree of engagement we ascend by these steps, and the heart of man perfects a motion towards God and good things thus gradually.

1. By an inclination or hankering, a propensity in the mind to this or that: this naturally is evil, and to evil; he that follows his inclination, goes wrong, the whole frame of a man's disposition being continually ill disposed. It is called in scripture, the speech or saying of the heart, and used indifferently both of good and bad, yet with a notable mark of diversity in the original, though translations mind it not. Eight times in the Old Testament is this phrase, 'Said in his heart,' used: four times by the wicked, and as oft by the righteous; but constantly, whensoever a wicked man useth it, as David's fool, Psalm xiv. 1. Esau, Haman, Sathan, it is in his heart; when a good man, as Hannah, David, it is to his heart; and teacheth:

1. That the heart and courses of a wicked man are subject to his inclinations; they dictate to him; they command, and he obeys.

2. But the inclinations of a good man are subject to him; he dictates to them, commands them as things subdued, and fit to be kept under.

Both these different inclinations, different, say, in respect of subject and object, are strengthened with nothing more, than the often reiteration of suitable acts; an evil inclination with evil acts, a good with good.

1. Sin gathereth strength by frequency of committing, and at last becomes as natural as heat or sleep. 'By following vanity, they became vain,' saith Jeremiah, chap. ii. 5.

2. A good inclination is furthered by good actions; frequency in performance turns to a habit: therefore the Jews, to habituate their heart to mourning, do always, for the space of three days before the memorial of the temple's desolation, in their public meetings, read chapters of mourning; for, (say they) three acts make a habit. And hereupon it was: that Israel, above and before other nations, became a blessed people; blessings being even naturalized upon them, by the holiness of the three patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, immediately succeeding each the other.

2. By a desire, which is an inclination augmented and actuated, carrying on the party to the thing desired, grounded on, or inclined by some external inforcements. This was in Paul, who by that relation to, and interest that he had in the Thessalonians, endeavoured abundantly with much desire to see their face, which put him to the essay once and again, as himself speaks, 1 Theff. ii. 17, 18.

3. A purpose, a determination to affect, to accomplish his desire: I have purposed, said David, 'that my mouth shall not transgress,' Psalm xvii. 3. which purposing, before it be taken up, should be well grounded, and when taken up, not lightly altered. For see how a change in such a purpose, put the apostle to a serious apology; 2 Cor. i. 6. he was minded to have visited them, he did not; he foresaw they might, they would

him of lightness, as either not minding, or not being master of his own determinations, and so consequently his ministry, and therein the gospel might be blemished: the fear of which stroke his heart, the prevention of which moved his spirit, that both they might be satisfied, and himself remain without blame.

4. A resolve, a purpose settled; Daniel was fully resolved, he had laid this charge upon his heart, that he would not defile himself with the king's meat, Dan. i. 8.

5. A tie or obligation, whereby the heart, otherwise shifty, is bound to the work intended, sometime by a single promise, sometime by an oath or vow, and sometime more publicly by a solemn covenant. And this last and highest degree is that which the prophet speaks, at least in this sense I take it. This is that engagement of soul, whereby a man prevents his starting aside: and this is that first phrase that was to be opened.

Of the second; to approach unto me.

This is the object, and this approachment is threefold: 1. In his inward man. 2. In his outward man. 3. In both.

1. In his inward man; in heart, by drawing close to God, enjoying a sensible and blessed communion with him, which is comfortable in such a degree, that where it is felt, it needs no bidding to make an engagement.

2. In his outward man, in his person approaching to God in the practice of all duties

commanded; God in his ordinances is powerfully present, man in their use stands within this presence.

3. In both, in all his abilities approaching to him in managing his holy cause; and therefore holy, because his. God walks in the midst of his peoples armies: when thy sons, O Zion, 'are armed against thy sons,' O Greece, 'the Lord God is seen over them,' Zech. ix. 13, 14. These are those approachings of the saints to their God: the first is their happiness, the second their duty, the third their honour. It is a happy thing to enjoy God's comforts in soul; it is our enjoined duty to obey him in his ways, and it is an honour to be found standing for the way of righteousness.

Of the third. The enquiry, who is this?

Scripture questions are of several uses, hold forth several senses; here it seems to be an approbation of the action spoken of. Who is this? What one is this, that so carefully engageth his heart? This is not ordinary among men, nor of an ordinary degree in man; few move, fewer engage themselves to move towards God. This approbation hath,

1. Its foundation in a duty: I approve this engaging, and the man because he engageth.

2. Its direction from the subject, heart. The engagement of the outward man may have wrong principles: that it may be right, let the heart, soul, inward parts, all that is within us be engaged to bless his holy name.

3. Its limitation from the object, to approach unto me: to engage the heart to sin, to the creature, to vanity, is neither commendable, nor approveable; but to close with God, to come to, stay with, and act for him, this is that which the prophet, and God in the mouth of the prophet here approves. And this brings us to,

§ II. *The propounding of the point, and that in these words.*

Doct. **G**OD observes with the eye of approbation, such as engage and tie themselves to him; he looks with an approving eye upon this carefulness: for such an engagement of soul is, 1. Needful. 2. Helpful; needful for the heart, helpful to our graces.

The needfulness is evident. The heart is slow and subtle, backward and deceitful; except it be drawn with the cords of such an engagement, it puts slowly forward; and when thus drawn, it will fall quickly off. Days of desolation beget resolves, times of terror produce engagements, which the heart (the storm past) will wilily and wickedly seek to evade. David suspected this countenance in himself, when he cries out, Oh! I have many good thoughts, but a naughty heart, many holy purposes, but a deceitful spirit: thou hast cause as a Creator, not to believe the tender of my obedience, nor as a just God, the promise of submission; but I

call to thy mercy to give assistance. 'Be surety for thy servant for good:' for the performance of all good I promise; Psa. cxix. 122. And Hezekiah in his sickness was not without fear of this deceitfulness. 'Oh Lord, I am oppressed, undertake for me;' I shall never keep my word, that word which my lips have spoken; and I have none dare pass his word for me: 'do thou, O Lord, undertake for me,' Isa. xxxviii. 14.

2. The helpfulness is undeniable; a heart from this engagement may fetch renewed strength continually. This engagement is a buckler of defence to arm us against Satan's inticement, is armour of proof to withstand the world's inducement, it makes us without fear or failing stand upon our own ground, and renew our courage like the eagle. Job was probably sometimes seduced with such foolish persuasions, to courses not less foolish, but he yielded not: what helped him? even his engagement: 'I have made a covenant with mine eyes, how then shall I look on a maid?' Job xxxi. 1. Constancy in good is well-pleasing to God; 'If any draw back, his soul hath no pleasure in them,' Heb. x. 38. Whatsoever then is needful for it, or helpful to it, he both prescribes and approves. O let us engage our hearts to this approachment, a duty enjoined, a sacrifice accepted.

But there is one scripture that fully sheweth the point, and the truth of it in all particulars. Consider then, Deut. xxvi. 17, 18. Three things may seem necessary herein to

be noted; the act, the approbation, and the reason; and here we have them all.

1. The act, engaging, or the persons, the engagers of themselves. Thou hast avouched, set up God this day to be thy God, not only in thy conscience by the act of faith, but even by thy mouth thou hast uttered this, probably in some solemn league and covenant. 'Thou hast made to say:' so much the Hebrew word *Heemarta* imports.

2. The approbation; and God answers thee accordingly, he hath avouched, set up thee to be his people; particularly to two privileges.

1. To be his peculiar people, the people of his own proper possession, joined so high, united so near, that they are admitted to a participation of many heavenly privileges; the actions of the one being communicated to the other; man's prayer is called God's, 'I will make them glad in the house of my prayer,' Isa. lvi. 7. God's people called man's, Moses's people, Moses's law: so in the law of God, and in his law, that is, the righteous man's law, Psalm i. 2.

2. To keep his commands: this seems rather to be a duty than a prerogative, yet a prerogative it is for a Christian to be holy, obedient, righteous: both directly, and accidentally.

1. Directly; the scripture teacheth so. The fruit of a Christian's being made free from sin is, unto holiness, Rom. vi. 22. 'If you will fear the Lord, and serve him' (these

are Samuel's words to the people) 'and not
 'rebel:' what then? what shall we have?
 'Then shall you and your king continue to
 'follow the Lord,' 1 Sam. xii. 14. Solomon
 setting down the recompence of a righteous
 person, saith, his reward shall be double in
 himself, and in his posterity; in himself,
 'he shall walk on in his integrity,' in his
 'posterity, 'then shall be blessed after him,'
 Prov. xx. 7.

2. Accidentally: holiness is a privilege,
 as well as a duty; it is a reward, a benefit
 to him who walks therein. It may, and oft
 doth daunt their persecutors, that otherwise
 would have taken away their lives. The
 heathens observe, that the majestic presence
 of a prince hath dashed the boldness, and so
 prevented the execution of some villainous
 attempt by a base traitor against their persons:
 and Christians know, that the power of holi-
 ness is able to dazzle the proudest spirits.
 Herod, saith the text, feared John, and so a
 long while did him no hurt. And the em-
 peror Adrian ceased his persecution against
 the Christians of his time, when he under-
 stood of their holiness of life. So true it is
 both ways, that the punishment of sin, is sin,
 and the reward of the command, is the
 command.

Both these privileges are again repeated,
 and further is evidenced in the following
 verse; 'Thou art his peculiar people, there-
 'fore will he make thee high above all
 'nations, in praise, name and honour, of

more esteem than any; and, thou keepest his commandments, and so he advanceth thee to be a holy people unto the Lord thy God: all this evidenceth God's approbation of an engaging heart. The reason and ground of God's approving this act, they are two.

1. Because the matter or duties, to which by this bond the heart is tied, are such, as God directly observes with an approving eye. The particulars are three here specified, and all elsewhere expressly subjected to this eye of God.

1st, Thou obligest thyself to walk in his ways, in the practice of all the duties of the second table; and upon such as depart from evil, and do good, upon such righteous ones, the eyes of the Lord are fastened, not his omniscient eye, but his protecting, blessing eye, that eye, the seeing whereof is of the same temper, with the open ear following: his eye is upon the righteous, and his ear open to their cry; that eye which stands in opposition to his face, which is against the wicked; Psalm xxxiv. 16, 17.

2dly, And to observe his ordinances and judgments, reverently to practise all the duties of the first table to God, and to such also God cast his eye of respect: 'The eye of the Lord is upon those that fear him, and that hope in his mercy,' Psalm. xxxiii. 18.

3dly, And to hearken to the means of both, to hear his voice: 'When I counsel thee and instruct thee in the way that

‘thou shouldst go, mine eye is upon thee
 ‘both to keep thee to it, and to bless thee
 ‘in it,’ Psal. xxxii. 8.

2. Because this engagement is a means to
 accomplish his promise: because thou hast
 avouched God, God hath avouched thee
 and will do as he hath said, and again, as
 he hath said; the repetition whereof, seems to
 argue contentedness in God, in that, by this
 avouchment, a way was opened for the ac-
 complishment of his promise. ‘God is well
 ‘pleased for his righteousness sake,’ Isa. xlii.
 21. delights, when he can evidence himself
 to be righteous and just, for the law and
 words of his mouth, he will magnify and
 make honourable in the faithfulness of their
 accomplishment. Mercy, the acts of mercy
 please him; Micah vii. 18. God finds in a
 righteous man rest of spirit, because by him
 he sends down a full influence of his favour
 upon the world. “If the world knew (say
 some Hebrew doctors,) of what worth a
 righteous man were, they would hedge him
 about with pearls,” &c. His life is bene-
 ficial to all, even in some sort to God him-
 self; for by him mercy is shewn to the world;
 his death therefore is of great consequence
 a greater affliction than those curses men-
 tioned, Deut. xxviii. ‘I will make thy plagues
 ‘wonderful; thy heavens shall be brass, they
 ‘shall distil no dew nor rain to water the
 ‘earth; but I will do a marvellous thing, a
 ‘marvellous and strange, a good man, a
 ‘wise man shall be taken away; and I can

'send no more blessings upon you:' There remains not a heart engaged, to whom I delight to approach; whiles such were, mine eye was satisfied with seeing good, my heart with doing good; now the one is removed, the other stopped. O where is he that engageth his heart to approach to his God! this is the second.

§ III. *The examining of the Duty.*

THIS engagement being thus approved, and therefore to be entered on; let us a little examine the duty, and mind two things.

1. What particulars do engage us, by what acts or thoughts doth the heart become engaged? And, 2. What hinders this engagement, and stops our entrance there-upon?

I. Several and many ways doth the heart become engaged to God: no consideration can enter our hearts, no occurrent happen in our lives, but it offers reasons enforcing this duty. We are engaged to God by our being, by our receiving, by our doing: mind either, and acknowledge thyself engaged.

1. Our being what we are, engageth us:

1st, That we are creatures, and so not forgotten in everlasting night of a not-being: that we are men, and not beasts; that we are Christians, and not heathens; all are engagements.

2^{dly}, But our being thus and thus; men

of gifts and parts; placed in such callings; qualified with such endowments; interested in such privileges: these are engagements indeed.

2. What we have.

1st, Every thing we have received binds us; all the acts of God's providence over us; all the effects of God's goodness to us; health, food, callings, trades, friends, families, clothes, the service of the creatures; sun, rain, fruits of the earth: all, all these are bonds.

2^{dly}, But especially, our more peculiar favours; inward experience of his love, and fruition of soul-communion with him: Oh, who would not be engaged for this!

3. What we do, even our own actions become our obligations; and that which comes from us, binds us.

1st, Our feeling prayers. Who dare practise what he prays against? A prayer against the power of sin, obliges to walk in the power of that prayer; neither will any lightly omit, what but late as an evil, he hath confessed to God.

2^{dly}, But especially (which is our present work) our solemn and serious vows, protestations, promises; our covenant in baptism, our particular covenants entered into, upon the apprehension of some approaching calamity, upon a day of humiliation, at a piercing sermon, or soul-searching prayer before a sacrament, or the like. If we have spoken with our lips, we cannot go back, we are engaged.

II. As for such things that may hinder, we should both note and avoid.

1. Ignorance: 'If thou knewest the gift of God,' saith Christ to the Samaritan woman: want of praying comes from want of knowing. 'Have you received the Holy Ghost?' was Paul's question, but the reply was, that 'could not be: we have not so much as heard, whether there be a Holy Ghost, or no.' Have you engaged our souls in a solemn league? Let this be our query, and the answer will be, We have not so much as heard, whether there be such a duty, or no. Ignorance hinders this bond.

2. Wretched profaneness, which flights and sets at nought all duties, ordinary, extraordinary; such mind sin, and the fulfilling thereof; and bind themselves to mischief with cords of vanity; whilst in the meantime they are contented to sit loose from God.

3. Wicked policy, both to avoid the taking, and to evade the keeping: scruples of conscience shall be pretended, by such as know not what conscience means. Scripture shall be alledged, by such as are little versed therein; this sentence shall be thus explained: this releasement shall be thus pretended: all is but seemingly to stop the mouth of conscience, that saith, they must both make and pay vows unto God. Yet the wilfully ignorant will neglect it; the wretchedly profane will contemn it; the wickedly politic

will avoid it; so the heart shall be left to its own swing, open to all corruption that breaks in like a flood. For the prevention whereof let us come on to

§ IV. *Encouragements to the practice.*

THE point thus propounded, and in several particulars described, wherein and whereby the soul may be engaged; there is nothing remaining, but the practice of it and that is yours. Up then, and be doing; disoblige yourselves, and be no longer servants to the world, to sin, to obey either the lusts thereof; but be ye bound to serve righteousness, and the God of righteousness for his service is perfect freedom. In this encouragement to this work, that I might do as much as I can, in this little time granted, and gained for preparation and delivery; I would advise, exhort, resolve and so prevent irreverence, backwardness and doubting; that neither the ignorant man, profane, nor the refractory contemn, nor the scrupulous question this holy ordinance of God, as unholy, needless, ambiguous. Let this encouragement then be received in words: 1. Cautionary. 2. Hortatory. Satisfactory.

I. *CAUTIONARY.*

Let this great work be done judiciously cautiously, and as an ordinance of God

Take we heed therefore, 1. To the manner.
2. To the matter. 3. To the consequence.

I. *To the manner.* See that it be done; 1. Cheerfully. 2. Religiously.

First, Cheerfully and willingly; for so did the people of Israel in their covenanting with God: 2 Chron. xv. 14, 15, 'They swore unto the Lord with a loud voice, with shoutings, and trumpets, and music, and they rejoiced because of the oath,' &c. God loves a cheerful giver, his heart is toward those that willingly offer themselves to the work of the Lord. And here, let me not conceal the mercy of the Lord to us, in the work now in hand; for why should not the Lord have the glory of all his favours? God hath directed our hearts to this duty, cheer-
ed up our affections to this engagement. Who almost sees not his hand in all this? His cheerfulness and forwardness, I now
all for, I did, I do, I hope, I shall see.

First. I did see. Which of us, brethren, hath not his heart yet rejoicing, but even to think upon this work, this last Monday in this place? Here was cheerfulness: who was not glad to see it? Who was not encouraged to it? Here was a willing people freely offering themselves to be bound to the Lord. Here was rejoicing;

1. In the performance: The like duty was never seen in our days within this land. It was, I am persuaded, the very birth-day of this kingdom, born anew to comfort and success; our hearts were then so elevated, they are not settled yet.

2. For the performance of such a duty, such a manner, by such persons. You might here have seen the Hon. House of Commons unanimously with hearts and hands lifted to the heavens, swearing to the most high God. Here might you have seen our dear brethren, the noble and learned Commissioners of Scotland, willingly coming into the covenant of truth, as the representative and a pledge for the whole kingdom. Here might you have seen the grave and reverend Assembly of Divines, forwardly countenancing others, willingly submitting themselves to this bond of the Lord. What I then say and now rehearse, most of you can attend. Ask your fathers, consult with the aged of our times, whether ever such a thing was done in their days, or in the days of their fathers before them.

2dly, *I do see*; and believe the like now. I have ground to be persuaded, that you all come with alacrity to this service.

1. The order for the taking, honours you with this, that you were desirous of yourselves, without compulsion, to take this upon you: blessed therefore be you of the Lord and blessed be the Lord for you.

2. The fulness of this present assembly called only for this end, for this duty.

3. The nature of your persons. Nobles, knights, gentlemen submit themselves to the yoke of the Lord. Colonels, captains, officers in the army, soldiers; even these all stand not off from, but close to, and for this

work in hand. Those of the Scots nation within this city, by their willingness, do give check to this cavil raised by some, who have nothing else to say, yet say this, perhaps the kingdom of Scotland will not take

We can instance in none, none that I know here. The ministers of the Lord, that have refuged themselves to this little sanctuary, both encrease and honour the number of them that swear, their own callings, and themselves. All these, as they have forwardly offered, so doubtless will earnestly repair in their lot, the breaches made in the Lord's house. Here is cheerfulness.

3dly, I hope, I shall see and hear, the next Lord's day, or the next convenient time, all our people readily coming into this land; that so both English and Scots, parliament and assembly, nobility and city, may rejoice together.

Secondly, Religiously, godly works must be done in a godly manner, that the act done for God's glory may be sanctified with God's presence. With what serious humiliation, and hearty prayers did Nehemiah begin this city? chap. ix. What a number of able men did Josiah collect together? 2 Kings xxiii. 2. And how reverently did they read in the scriptures, and speak of the nature of the covenant? Both Nehemiah by praying, and Josiah by reading, desired in this holy business to approve themselves followers of holiness in the sight of God. And at the last

Numb. II.

taking in this place, who was not touched with that feeling prayer, made by that man of God; that godly exhortation, which followed from || another; that pithy relation by that † man of name; that soul-affecting thanksgiving, wherewith a godly ‡ doctor closed the day? and that no less piety, and love of God might appear in you, after you resolved upon the work; you desired that the ordinance might be sanctified to you by the word of God and prayer; you moved me to this employment, and got it ordered accordingly: and now, I doubt not, but in the action, you will do it with such reverence of God's majesty, such awfulness of heart, that in lifting up your hands to the most high God, he may be pleased to accept the sacrifice, and make it comfortable. Thus to the manner.

H. To the matter. For the matter, that it be lawfully warranted by the word of God. To examine these particularly, in all several parts thereof, were the work of a volume, not of one sermon; that will be done by others: but to do something, and what we may for this time; it is not difficult to parallel from scripture this covenant in all the parts of it. The lawfulness of covenanting, I suppose not questionable, as furtherance and help to a spiritual progress we find it oft used: the New Testament affords but rare instances, the church then

* Mr. White. || Mr. Nye, † Mr. Henderfon. ‡ Dr. Good.

infancy having little occasion, and as little need of such combining, fasting and days of prayer, which are of the same nature, we find often; and the angel, Rev. x. 5, 6. 'lift up his hand, (a covenanting gesture) and swore by him that liveth,' (a covenanting act;) but the Old Testament is full. Take even this as granted, and come to the particular materials, and in every part, for every article, we can find an instance. The articles in this covenant are six: the preamble sets forth, 1. The occasion; their aim at God's glory, their enemies aim at their ruin. The pattern; the commendable practice of those kingdoms, and the example of churches in all ages. The close containeth their resolution against all impediments that may either stop the taking, or disable the keeping of this league, their own sins. The body of the covenant contains the articles; the lawfulness of which seems thus to be warranted.

The first is the reformation of the false, and the preservation of the true worship of God, and the uniting of all the kingdoms in that truth thus reformed. Such a covenant took Aza, and his people in his time, 2 Chron. xv. 8, 9.

1. For the reformation of religion decayed. He purged away all the dross, and renewed all the defects. He repaired the altar of the Lord, the main part of their ceremonial covenant.

2. For the uniting of the kingdoms in the embracing of this truth. Aza gathered all

Judah and Benjamin, this was his own people, the subjects of one kingdom; and with them the strangers, that is, the inhabitants of Ephraim, Manasseh, and Simeon, these were the people of another land. So here are the persons covenanting, the matter covenanted to. The persons, the subjects, two several kingdoms; the matter, reformation, and to seek the God of their fathers; to this they swear, like as the inhabitants of England, Scotland and Ireland, meet all in one duty, even a covenant, and that to one end, to seek and serve God in the purity of his way after the purity of his will; to this, as Ase and his people, we swear.

The second is the extirpation of idolatry and wickedness, and all things contrary to truth, not according to godliness, the proper and perpetual matter of all covenants. So did Ase, so did Joash, so did Josiah, so did Nehemiah.

1. Ase took away all abominations, Chron. xv. He was impartial, sparing neither sin, place, nor person: not sin, he removed all abominations; not place, from all places, towns of his inheritance, and of his conquest; not person, he deposed his mother, or rather grandmother from her state for her idolatry.

2. Joash, or his covenanters. Indeed the people of the land, (for such usually are most zealous) they ruined the altars, houses and all. They broke down all the monuments of idolatry, all to pieces, thoroughly to some purpose, priest and all. They slew Matthan priest of Baal with the sword.

3. Josiah purged the whole kingdom: 2 Kings xxiii. and Nehemiah with zeal, extirpated the strange wives. Here is a covenant that rooted out idolatry, popery, the Baalistical prelate Matthan, and all his prelatical faction the Chemarims, 2 Kings xxiii. 5. and all this, for this end, that the Lord might be one, and his name one.

The third is, the preservation of the liberties of the kingdom and the king, for matters merely civil. Such was that covenant that Jehoida established, after their engagements for spirituals to God. He made a covenant between the king and people, that he should preserve their liberties, they his authority, and both each other mutually.

The fourth, for the discovery and punishment of malignants, that encrease or continue our division. Without a covenant such a discovery did Mordecai make of Bigthan and Teresh, the king's eunuchs, Esth. ii. 21, 22. Such a discovery made the Jews of Sanballat, and his fellows to Nehemiah, Chap. iv. 12. Josiah was not without his informers, 2 Kings xxiii. 17. But with a covenant was the punishment of such varlets settled. Whosoever would not seek the Lord God of their fathers, should be slain without sparing, be he whom he would be, small or great, man or woman; 2 Chron. xv. 13. For why should not every one value the public above the private, the common good before his own?

The fifth, the preservation of the union,

and of the pacification between the two kingdoms. This is the matter of all civil leagues. Such a league made Isaac with Abimelech, Jacob with Laban, David with Hiram, &c. But chiefly such a pacification doth God promise to make between Israel and Judah. Ezek. xxxvii. 26. They should both live under one king, verse 24. so do the English and Scots: and both dwell in one land, verse 25. so do the English and Scots: they shall have the same ministry and religion; so shall labour the English and Scots: and a pacification will God make between them, and that by covenant, and such a covenant, should never be forgotten or broken; such a thing are we doing now, and then God's sanctuary shall be placed among us, the sanctuary of his presence, service, protection, which is our expectations and our hope.

Lastly, The firm adhering to this covenant, and continuance in the same notwithstanding all opposition, contradiction, dissuasion to the contrary whatsoever. All the people stood to the covenant, 2 Kings xxiii. This was Josiah's care not only for himself but for his people; 'He made all that was found in Judah and Benjamin to stand to it; so all his days they turned not back from the Lord God of their Fathers,' Chron. xxxiv. 32, 33. This is the covenant, and this is a general view of the general matter; this is according to the aim of those that made it, take it, swear to it. Will but an atheist can refuse the first? who but a papist the second? who but an oppressor

or a rebel, the third? who but the guilty, the fourth? who but men of fortune, desperate cavaliers, the fifth? who but light and empty men, unstable as water, the sixth? In a word, the duty is such, that God hath ordained; the matter is such, as God approveth; the taking such, as God observeth; and the consequences such, as God hath promised. And in them stands my third caution, to which I now come.

III. To the consequences. For the consequences, and issues that do or must follow upon the taking, be also cautelous; take heed therefore, that after this heart-engagement to God, none start back like a broken bow. See that you neither.

1. Falsify the oath. 2. Profane the oath.

I. Do not falsify the oath, making the actions of the outward man, contrary to this action of the heart. An oath is one of the two immutable things, wherein it is impossible that God should lie; not fitting, that man should. The people's forementioned example teaches constancy, they stood to it. The covenants ordinary epithet [everlasting] implies continuance: neither can God, or should man play the children, say, and unsay. All our covenants in him should be yea; not yea, and nay. If we prove loose, we prove false, and lie unto God that made us. Take heed to your covenant, Josh. xxiv. 27. This stone, these walls, these pillars, these seats shall witness against you, that you denied him: to falsify the engagement, is to deny our God; his power, his revenging justice,

his word, his presence, and the like; if you wilfully falsify this oath wherewith you are bound, as much as in you lies, you make God any thing but a God. Keep truth and fidelity for ever.

II. Do not profane it, by a slight esteem, by an irreverent taking, by an unholy life.

First, By a slight esteem, as a matter of no moment. Can that be a trifle, which is the fruit of the judicious consultations of the agents of both kingdoms, as the only means to perpetuate the union? Can that be a trifle, which was produced by such, who had merely the glory of God before their eyes as conducting much thereto? Can that be a trifle, which is published as the main and sole preventive of all the bloody plots of God's enemies against the truth? Can that be a trifle, which is now cleaved to as a means more effectual, and a degree above supplications, remonstrances, protestations, to preserve ourselves, and our religion? All this and more the preamble speaks.

2dly, By irreverent taking. It was resolved on after mature deliberation. It is a lifting up of the hand to the most high God, and a swearing by his name, and God's name must not be taken in vain: such will God not hold guiltless. But of this before.

3dly, By an unholy life. Such a thing would mar all we have done; though defiled with former sins, yet now sin no more: our covenant forbids it: our state now stands thus. Either by our sins we shall make a breach into our covenant, or by our covenant

make a breach from our sins. In the close of the covenant, we resolve on the endeavour, that this covenant may have its desired fruit. We desire to be humbled for our own sins, the land's sins, undervaluing the gospel, neglecting the power, and purity of it, no endeavour to receive Christ into our hearts, no care to walk worthy of him in our lives. Such and the like sins a godly covenant must shun, lest he profane it. Let us then prize it as an effectual means of good, take it with a reverend fear of God, honour it in holiness of life for ever. Let us both verify it, and sanctify it by continuing to stand in it, by endeavouring to live by it to God's glory, that this taken covenant may be for the name, the honour, the praise of the great Jehovah for ever.

These are the cautions.

II. *HORTATORY.*

These cautions being observed; come all, and let us enter into an everlasting covenant with the Lord; come on, and let us engage our hearts unto our God: we have a propensity to keep off; let a covenant keep us close: our hearts would be wandering; let a covenant bind them. Will you trust yourselves without a tie? Do you know yourselves? Come to this work, with a heart, with a heart lifted up, as well as a hand, as high as a hand; Lam. iii. 41. 'Let us lift up our hearts to our hands;' let the ardency of our affection raise up our spirit to meet the Lord, to whom we adjoin ourselves for ever. To you I cry,

to whom the order speaks, to every of you I call, come engage your hearts.

First, Nobles, both greater and lesser, think not the duty below you, too mean for you. There is but one way to heaven for all. Scorn not to join with inferiors in this work. In Christ there is neither male nor female, no respect of persons. The same way that the soul of the poorest is refreshed, is the soul of the richest. Poor men pray, and princes must pray; common men humble their souls, and repent, and crowned kings must do so too. The people of God, they walk aright, and all men, great and small, must follow them alike: the eye of every ordinary man must be towards the Lord. So as the tribes of Israel are, and the same way must Tyre and Sidon look, though they be very wise, Zech. ix. 1, 2. No largeness of parts, greatness of place, eminency in gifts, of wisdom, learning, wit, not amplitude of rule, nor any high thoughts can exempt; but he must subject himself to the condition and courses of the lowest sort. Heaven regards not the goodliness of the person, looks not as man looks; for God regards the heart.

2dly, Soldiers, for you also are engagers. This says, you have a noble pattern; but I hope I may say, you outwrite your copy. They came to John Baptist, and to the place, where he baptized, Luke iii. 14. You come to the presence of God, and the place, where the heart is to be engaged. They came to be directed what to do; you to do, **what** you

have been directed. Ride you on prosperously in this righteous truth. It lies mainly upon you to be holy, yea, more than upon others. Your adventures are more hazardous, your dangers more probable; yea, your deaths perhaps more near. Therefore,

First, You must remove from you wickedness, and wicked men. Wickedness from your hearts, wicked men from your armies. Let both your persons be holy, and your companies holy. God himself commands the former, the prophet from God the latter. When the host goeth forth, then, and then chiefly, thou shalt keep thee from every evil thing,' Deut. xxiii. 9. When Judah's king marched out, assisted with Israelitish auxiliaries, which were idolaters; let not (saith the prophet) 'the men of Israel go with thee, for God is not with Israel:' if thou do, thou shalt not prosper, 2 Chron. xxv. 7. If there were no evil sin in your hearts, no evil man in your hosts, God would be with you, with a shout, even the Lord with the sound of a trumpet.

And 2dly, Your success depends on God's presence. When thou seest multitudes of armies incircling thee, fear not, for God is with thee, and God is with thee to save thee; he walks with thee to fight for thee, and to prosper thee, Deut. xx. 1, 4. We shall be cast back, yea, quite off, if God go not forth with our armies; or, in our armies; the word bears either: when God goes not in our armies, Psal. lx. 10. rules not in our hearts, lives, conversations, by holiness; then

he goes not forth with our armies by victory and success.

3. The want of godly agents, to manage a godly cause, a great lamentation. 'Help, Lord, save, O God, for the godly fail, and the faithful cease from among men:' were there any such in being, they would bear rule with God, and be faithful for the saints, their persons and prayers would gain prevalence with God, their endeavours and constancy would shew fidelity to the saints, and then in Judah, our land, would things go well: and as once Ezekiel of the scarcity of governors to rule, Ezek. xix. 14. so we of fit men to fight, when corruption and looseness hath so possessed the hearts, and lives of our men of war, that there remains no sanctified, and godly man to make a soldier; 'This is a lamentation, and shall be for a lamentation.'

4. What ground have we to expect good? When the sons of darkness go to cast out the prince of darkness, is this possible? Can Satan cast out Satan? It is a satisfactory answer, that we rest in, and stops the mouths of all not incurably blinded, when we hear of protestations, and promises to maintain the protestant religion, and laws of the land; when we see, that the effecting of the one is by the sword of papists, of the other, by the hand of delinquents; except we should think, that man can (as God) work happy ends by contrary means. For we say, how can Satan cast out Satan? So to ourselves, 'tis not very likely, that, if Satan keep the hold he hath of our souls, you should dispossess him of

that strong hold he hath of our land. But you know so much, and therefore by engaging your heart this day to God, you first endeavour to expel Satan out of your own consciences; and then shall you see clearly to drive him from our kingdom.

You of our brethren of Scotland, come you, and enter into this sure covenant. Lay the foundation of such an eternal league and peace, that the sun shall never see broken: all your countrymen, your kingdom are not here. Let your forwardness to this work tell us, what they would do, if they were. Some having nothing else to say, yet cannot withhold to question, whether the Scots will enter into it or no? As the question is without any ground, so shall it be without any other answer for the present, than this; all that nation in town have been ready to this great work. Can you instance in any that have been backward to swear unto the word? If in none, then put away prejudicate thoughts, and entertain in their place earnest desires, that this covenant now by both kingdoms entered into, may be like Ezekiel's sticks, which resembled the divided houses of Judah and Israel; which the prophet holding, they became one in his hand, Ezek. xxxvii. 15. So this national covenant taken to the hand of God's merciful approbation, may this day, this year become one, and for ever remain one: so that (as Israel and Judah enter this typical union in two sticks) England and Scotland after this religious union in

one covenant, may for ever be one people in this island of Great Britain; and that our king may continue king to them both; and that henceforth they may no more be two peoples, nor divided into kingdoms; that our religion be corrupted no more, as of late; but being cleansed, we may be the Lord's people, and he may be our God for ever: that Jesus Christ may bear rule, and we both may have one ministry, and enjoy that truth, which Christ, when he ascended up on high, gave as a gift to men, during our days, and the days of our posterity; we and our sons, and our sons sons, from this time forth, and for evermore: that the Lord would plant his sanctuary among us, and make these two people his dwelling-place continually: that this covenant may be a covenant of peace, and a covenant of truth, and a covenant for everlasting. And let us that desire it, daily pray for it, and now express it, and with cheerfulness of heart say Amen, Amen.

4. You, my brethren of the ministry, your hearts are to be engaged too, that you all may gain God by the engagement: be not you behind the very forwardest of the Lord's people; you are not an inconsiderable part in this land. The joy and happiness of Israel was, because of the Levites that waited Neh. xii. 44. that were diligent in their duties and diligently attended upon the Lord.

'will cause the horn of Israel to flourish' 'saith God:' by what means? 'I will give thee Ezekiel an open mouth,' Ezek xxix. 11.

that God may give you a heart to teach
knowledge, come, engage your hearts as a
gift to God. O, saith Moses, 'that all the
Lord's people were prophets!' O, say we,
that all this land's people had prophets, but
prophets of the Lord, that might feed them
with wisdom and understanding, that they
might know the Lord, from the greatest
the least of them! But ah? Lord God, the
re of this kingdom is distempered, dim, and
dark; and then how great is this darkness!
our prophets have prophesied lies, and our
priests have pleaded for Baal, and they have
perverted the word of the Lord; and what
wisdom is in them? Instead of standing for
God, they have stood against him; and in-
stead of being the best, they are become the
worst: the prophet that teacheth lies, he is
the tail. If God should come, as once, to
seek for a man, that should stand in the gap,
and make up the breach; among these he
would find the fewest: in this respect our
state may be like that, which we find described,
Isa. vi. 4. Christ comes to make a perfect
description of his church, and so consequent-
ly a comfortable expression of himself to his
church: and whereas the eyes are the chiefest
ornament of beauty, and therefore likeliest to be
looked upon, he begins thus. '* Turn away
thine eyes from me, for they have over-
seen me. I deliver not this as the only, or perhaps as any true
reason of this place; neither do they dislike me that say
it is rather pretty, than sound. Suitable, I am sure it is,
and so is the pity: my author is Rabbi Moses Almosnenu,
in his book called, the hands of Moses, the first finger
of the left hand: or his second interpretation of this verse.

'come me.' By eyes, understand the ministry; I come to speak comfortable things to my people, but set away the ministers out of my sight, for they have overcome my patience, and filled me with fury: now these being removed, the description doth lovingly go on. 'Thy hair, thy young professors, are like a flock of goats; thy teeth, thy civil officers, like a flock of sheep;' thy temples, thy ordinary and common Christians, thus and thus, &c. All right, but the eyes, the eyes I cannot endure. But let none of us provoke this complaint, nor hold off any longer from the Lord that invites. What say you? Are you willing to this engagement? Will you bind yourselves to the Lord? Let me extend my speech to all, and dispatch the remains of this point, and my meaning thus: that you may be encouraged to engage, consider two things.

First, The seasonableness.

Secondly, The success of such engagements.

First, The seasonableness: there is a time for all purposes, and every word and action is beautiful in his own time. A public engagement is then seasonable,

1. When a land hath been full of troubles: God by such troubles prepares a people for him in this duty. 'I will cause you to pass under the rod, and so I will bring you into the bond of the covenant,' Ezek. xx. 37. And we know, we feel God hath chastised us sore of late; but in them he hath not given us over to death, that by them he might prepare us a people fit for himself.

2. When a land hath been full of corruptions, and a shrewd decay hath been in spirituals: by a covenant hath such a people recovered themselves, and regained their God. After the great apostasy by Athaliah, Jehoiada renewed their interest by a covenant. When Manasses and his son had suffered destruction from God, and advanced idolatry with or above God; Josiah purged all by a covenant. Our decays are evident, our corruptions destructive; our covenant therefore seasonable. Come, let us engage our hearts to approach to God.

3. When the enemy begins to fall, and God begins to shine upon his own. Asa returning from a victory, called his land to a covenant, 2 Chron. xv. When Athaliah was slain, the league was sworn, by Joash and his kingdom. Since this motion of a covenant is come among us, God hath, as it were, begun to draw near, in the siege of Gloucester raised, in the success at Newbery, gained. God is worming out his and our adversaries, which he will do by little and little, till they be consumed. This covenant is seasonable.

2dly, The success. Come and see the works of the Lord, what wonders he hath wrought, when a people hath thus bound themselves to be his.

1. A king injuriously put from his right by an usurping hand, after such a covenant was re-established, 2 Kings xi. 19. 'He sat him down on the throne of the kings.'

2. A land miserably put from its peace after such a covenant, was re-settled, peace was re-obtained; and that as a fruit of prayer, and so acknowledged, 2 Chron. xv. 15. 'Israel had sworn, and fought God; God was found of them: and the Lord gave them rest round about.'

3. Religion craftily, and wickedly put from its purity after such a covenant, was reformed; after such a reformation continued, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 33. The engagement being made, 'all Josiah's days they returned not back from the Lord God of their fathers.'

4. Rebels and rebellion, basely and bloodily backed and managed against the Lord and his ways, against his people and their practices; after such a covenant, have been overthrown and subdued, Ezek. xx. 37, 38. 'I will bring you into the bond of the covenant.' Then I will sever from among you the rebels; I will chase them from their own land, and hinder that they shall not enter into the land of Israel. The Lord give this success concerning Ireland, sever out the rebels there from true subjects; chase them from their own land; and yet keep them from ever entering into our land, the land of the inheritance of the Lord.

Now these successful effects of covenanting well minded,

First, May hint to us a satisfactory reason, in case peace comes not presently. God hath some more adversaries to overthrow, to worm out; his sword hath not eaten flesh enough; neither are his arrows drunk with

blood yet; with the blood of such earthly men, whom he hath appointed to destruction. The hearts of the Philistines were so hardened, that they never sought after peace, Josh. xi. 20. 'For it came of the Lord, to the intent that they might be utterly destroyed.' Who knows, whether our peace hath been denied; our propositions cast out; our treaties fruitless, for such an end as this? It was of the Lord, who hath a purpose to destroy more. God lays afflictions on his people, and they continue upon them; but in the mean space to quiet their spirits, he teacheth them out of his law, that these troubles must stay only 'till a pit be digged 'for the wicked,' Psal. xciv. 12, 13.

2dly, May encourage us to go on. You have now armour of proof, such armour, as is not ordinary, armed with a covenant: Go, saith the angel to Gideon, in this thy might. Go (say I, to every one) in this thy might, the strength of this thy covenant, and the effect will be such, as is not ordinary. When the Philistines perceived that the Israelites had brought the ark of the covenant into the battle, they cried out, 'Woe unto us; for it hath not been so heretofore: 'wo unto us; who shall deliver us out of the 'hands of these mighty gods?' 1 Sam. iv. 7. When your enemies shall perceive, that you come armed with the armour of a covenant with God, I hope, they stricken with amazement, shall cry, "Woe unto us; we were never so opposed before: woe unto us; who shall deliver us out of the power

of this mighty prevailer?" If it will thus daunt, take it with you, be strong. - Again, I say, Go in the might thereof, and God shall prosper thee for ever.

III. SATISFACTORR.

According to the condition of the person, such is the nature of the objection. One out of the malignity of his spirit, cavils against the work; another out of tenderness of conscience, scruples the taking. I shall briefly touch upon one or two, and wind up all in a few words. The queries I have met with, are such as these: two objections when I was designed to this service, were sent me in writing, which, when thoroughly viewed, I perceived nothing at all to concern our case, or covenant.

Obj. 1. Whether by any law, divine or human, may reformation of religion be brought in by arms?

Ans. 1. What is this at all to the covenant, where there is no mention of arms at all?

2dly, What is this to our present condition, where reforming by arms is not all the question? For if reformation of religion be the case of our affairs; then either the parliament are they that do it, or the cavaliers: not the cavaliers, for they are on the defensive: witness all their declarations. Not the parliament, for then the cavaliers will be found fighters against religion, and resisters of God.

3dly, I answer negatively, it is not. The sword is not the means which God hath ordained to propagate the gospel: 'Go and

‘teach all nations;’ not, go and subdue all nations, is our Master’s precept.

Obj. 2. Whether to swear to a government that shall be, or to swear not to dissent from such a future government, be not to swear upon an implicit faith?

Ans. 1. This is nothing to the covenant, neither can I see upon what ground any should raise such an impertinent scruple.

2dly, It is, he that so swears, swears upon an implicit faith: for one reason against the articles of the prelates was, that they forced us to swear to the homilies that shall be set out. But these things are extravagant.

Other objections by word of mouth have been propounded, some whereof I will here touch upon.

Obj. 1. One would make a stand at the phrase, [in our callings,] as if some politic mystery were therein involved, and would have it changed, [according to our callings, or so far forth as they extend.] *Sol.* There is an identity in the phrase, an action enjoined to be done in such a place, every corner, as far as that place extends, is that place, and no other. All is one.

Obj. How if the parliament should hereafter see a convenience in prelacy for this kingdom, were not this oath then prejudicial, either to the parliament’s liberty, or kingdom’s felicity?

Ans. This objection supposes,

First, That the most wicked antichristian government, may be a lawful government in point of conscience.

2dly, That it is possible, that this prelatical government may be convenient for a state or kingdom. When as

1. They have been burdensome in all ages; what opposites in England have they been to our kings, till their interests were changed?

2. All reformed religions in the world have expelled them, as incompatible with reformation.

3. They have set three kingdoms together by the ears, for the least, and worst of causes, which now lie weltering in their own blood, ready to expire.

4. Experience now shews, there is no inconvenience in their want; either in Scotland, or in England.

Obj. But what, if the exorbitancies be purged away, may not I, notwithstanding my oath, admit of a regulated prelacy?

Ans. 1. We swear not against a government, that is not.

2dly, We swear against the evils of every government; and doubtless many materials of prelacy must of necessity be retained, as absolutely necessary.

3dly, Taking away the exorbitancies, the remaining will be a new government, and no prelacy.

Obj. For the discovery of all malignants, all that have been; whether, if I have a friend, that hath been a malignant, and is now converted, am I bound to discover him?

Ans. This his malignity, was either before the covenant, or since; if before, no. For

hen this league had no being, and a *non-ens* can have no contrariety. If since, the discovery must be at the first appearance of malignity, whilst he is so.

Obj. What if one make a party to uphold prelacy, whilst it stands by law, must I oppose him, or discover him by virtue of this oath? Doth the oath bind me to oppose legal acts?

Ans. 1. *Quer.* Whether there be any particular law for prelacy?

2. *Quer.* Whether the making a party be legal?

3. *Quer.* Whether any thing, the extirpation of which is sworn by an ordinance of parliament, can be said to stand by law?

These are some queries I have met with. I heartily wish that the same tenderness of conscience in all things may be seen, which is not, it will hardly be called a scruple of tenderness, but a cavil of malignity. What now remains but only prayers, that the great God of our judgments and consciences, would clear and satisfy our souls in these leagues and bonds, that without reluctance we may swear to God, and having sworn, we may have a care to keep the oath inviolable; that once Israel, so all England may rejoice because of the oath: and God may be established, and his kingdom settled; that his presence may dwell among men, and his protection among the sons of men; that he may be near in our covenanting, found in our prayers, and give us rest; and that we being engaged, may live to him, and not to others, henceforth and for ever.

DIE SABBATHI, 7 Octob. 1643.

IT is this day ordered by the Common's House of Parliament, that MR. CARYL be desired to print his sermon which he preached on Friday last, at St. Margaret's church at Westminster, upon the taking of the Covenant: and that MR. BROWN do return him thanks from this House, for his great pains therein. And further order, that none do reprint his sermon without his consent.

H. ELSYNG, Cler. Parl. D. Com.

THE
TURE, SOLEMNITY, GROUNDS, PROPERTY, AND
BENEFITS

OF A

SACRED COVENANT.

TOGETHER WITH THE

DUTIES

OF THOSE WHO ENTER INTO SUCH A

COVENANT,

delivered in a SERMON at Westminster, at that public CONVENTION, (ordered by the Honourable House of COMMONS) for the taking of the COVENANT, by all such, of all degrees, as willingly presented themselves, upon Friday, October 6th, 1643.

By the Rev. Mr. JOSEPH CARYL,
one of the Members of the Westminster Assembly of
Divines.

AL. ii. 2, 3, 4. *The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against his Anointed, saying, let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, the Lord shall have them in derision.*



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1799.

TO

All those who love the Lord Jesus Christ
sincerity, and sincerely associated them-
selves in the bond of this holy Covenant
when this sermon was preached.

THE author, their unworthy, yet willing
servant, in this or any other work of the
Lord, humbly presents this sermon printed
heartily beseeching God, our God, the great
the mighty, and the terrible God, who
keepeth covenant for ever, to strengthen
all, in performing all the duties, which we
have promised in this covenant; to fill us and
these kingdoms, with all the blessings, which
this covenant promiseth, to the glory of his
own most holy name, the advancement of
the gospel, in peace and truth, as the gracious
return of our present labours, and prayers
ers, and the portion of our posterity; that
the children which are yet unborn may bless
us, and bless God for us.

sermon preached at the late Solemn Assembly, for the taking of the Covenant, upon Friday the sixth of this instant, October 1643.

NEHEMIAH ix. 38.

and because of all this, we make a sure covenant, and write it, and our princes, Levites, and priests, seal unto it.

THE general subject of this verse, is the special business of this day. A solemn engagement to the Lord, and among ourselves, in a sure covenant. Wherein we may consider these five things.

First, The nature of a covenant, from the whole.

Secondly, The grounds of a covenant, from those words, because of all this.

Thirdly, The property of a covenant, in that epithet, 'Sure we make a sure covenant.'

Fourthly, The parties entering into, and engaging themselves in a covenant, expressed by their several degrees and functions. Princes, Levites, priests. And were these all? All whom this verse specifies, and enow to bring in all the rest? Where the governors and the teachers go before in an holy example, what honest heart will not follow? And the next chapter shews us, all who were honest hearted, following this holy example, verse 28. 'And the rest of the people, the

‘priests, the Levites, the porters, the singers
 ‘the Nethinims, and all they that had separated
 ‘themselves from the people of the
 ‘lands, unto the law of God, their wives
 ‘their sons, and their daughters, every one
 ‘having knowledge, and having understanding.
 ‘ing. ver. 29. They clave unto their brethren,
 ‘their nobles, and entered into,’ &c.

Fifthly, The outward acts by which they
 testified their inward sincere consent, and
 engaged themselves to continue faithful in
 that covenant: First, writing it. 2dly, sealing
 to it. 3dly, (in the tenth chapter. ver. 29.)
 ‘They entered into a curse. 4thly, Into an
 ‘oath, to walk in God’s law, which was
 ‘given by Moses the servant of God, and to
 ‘observe to do all the commandments of the
 ‘Lord their God, with the statutes and
 ‘judgments. And that they would not give
 ‘their daughters to the people of the land,
 &c. With divers many articles of that co-
 venant, tending both to their ecclesiastical
 and civil reformation.

I begin with the first point, the nature of
 a covenant. Concerning which, we may
 receive some light from the notation of the
 original words; 1. For a covenant. 2. For
 the making of a covenant. The Hebrew
Berith (a covenant) comes from *Barab*,
 which signifieth two things: *First*, To choose
 exactly, and judiciously*. 2dly, To eat
 moderately, or sparingly. And both these
 significations of the root *Barab*, have an

* *Elegit, quia eliguntur personæ inter quas et res ac con-
 ditiones propter quas fœdus initur.* Buxtorf.

influence upon this derivative *Berith*, a covenant: the former of these intimating, if not enforcing, that a covenant is a work of sad and serious deliberation, for such are elective acts. Election is, or ought to be made, upon the rational turn of judgment, not upon a catch of fancy, or the hurry of our passions.

Now, in a covenant, there is a double work of election: *First*, An election of the persons, between whom. *2dly*, An election of the conditions, or terms upon which the covenant is entered. 'As God's covenant people are his chosen people, so must ours.' Some persons will not enter into covenant, though invited; and others, though they offer themselves, are not to be admitted. They who are not fit to build with us, are not fit to swear with us. Some offered their help to the Jews in the repair of the temple, (Ezra iv. 2.) 'Let us build with you, for we seek your God.' But this tender of their service was refused, ver. 3. 'Ye have nothing to do with us, to build an house unto our God; but we ourselves together will build,' &c. What should we do with their hands in the work, whose hearts, we know, are not in the work? The intendment of such enjoining, must be either to build their hay and stubble with our gold and silver, (1 Cor. iii. 10.) or else to pull down by night, what they build by day, and secretly to undermine that noble fabric, which seemingly they endeavoured to set up.

We find in this book of Nehemiah, that the persons combining in that covenant, were choice persons. The text of the tenth chapter, sets two marks of distinction upon them ver. 28. *First*, 'All they that separated themselves from the people of the lands unto the law of God. *2dly*, All having knowledge, and having understanding. Here are two qualifications, whereof one is spiritual, and the other is natural. The plain English of both may be this, 'that fools and malignants, such as (in some measure) know not the cause, and such as have no love at all to the cause, should be outcast from this covenant.' Such sapless and rotten stuff will but weaken, if not corrupt this sacred band.

The tenor of the covenant now tendered speaks thus, respecting the persons. "We noblemen, barons, knights, gentlemen, citizens, burgesses, ministers of the gospel, and commons, of all sorts, in the kingdom of England, Scotland, and Ireland," &c. And doth not this indistinctly admit all, and all, of all sorts? I answer, no. For the words following in the preface, shew expressly, that only they are called to it, who are of one reformed religion; which shuts out all papists, till they return. And the articles pass them through a finer sieve, admitting only such as promise, yea, and swear, that through the grace of God, they will sincerely, really, and constantly endeavour the preservation of the reformed religion, against the common enemy in the one kingdom, the reformation and

extirpation of what is amiss in the other two; as also, in their own persons, families, and relations. They who do thus, are choice persons indeed, and they who swear to do thus, are (in charity and justice) to be reputed so, till their own acts and omissions falsify their oaths. Thus our covenant makes an equivalent, though not a formal or nominal election of the persons.

2dly, There must be a choice of conditions in a covenant; as the persons obliged, so the matter of the obligation must be distinct. This is so eminent in the covenant offered, that I may spare my pains in the clearing of it; every man's pains in reading of it, cannot but satisfy him, that there are six national conditions about which we make solemn oath, and one personal, about which we make a most solemn profession and declaration, before God and the world. And all these are choice conditions: such as may well be held forth to be (as indeed they are) the results and issues of many prayers, and serious consultations, in both the kingdoms of England and Scotland. Conditions they are, in which holiness and wisdom, piety and policy, zeal for God in purging his church, and care for man in settling the commonwealth, appear to have had (in a due subordination) their equal hand and share.

Thus much of a covenant, from the force of the word in the first sense, leading us to the choice both of persons and conditions.

2dly, The root signifies, to eat moderately, or so much as breaks our fast. And this

refers also to the nature of a covenant, which is to draw men into a friendly and holy communion, and converse one with another. 'David describes a familiar friend, in whom he trusted, to be one, that did eat of his bread,' Psal. xli. 9. And the apostle Paul, when he would have a scandalous brother denied all fellowship in church-covenant, he charges it thus, 'With such a one, no not to eat,' 1 Cor. v. 11. Hence it was a custom upon the making up of covenants, for the parties covenanting, soberly to feast together. 'When Isaac and Abimelech sware one to another, and made a covenant; the sacred story tells us, that Isaac made them a feast, and they did eat and drink.' Gen. xxvi. 26, 30. A covenant is a binder of affection, to assure it, but it is a loosener of affection, to express it. And their hearts are most free to one another, which are most bound to one another. How unbecoming is it, that they who swear together, should be so strange as scarce to speak together? That which unites, ought also to multiply our affections.

Further, the word hints, so to converse together, as not to sin together; for it signifies, moderation in eating. As if it would teach us, that at a covenant-feast, or when covenanters feast, they should have more grace, than meat at their tables: or if (through the blessing of God) their meat be much, their temperance should be more. The covenant yields us much business, and calls to action: excess soils our gifts, and damps our spirits, sitting us for sleep, not for work.

in and by this covenant, we (who were almost carried into spiritual and corporal slavery) are called to strive for the mastery. Let us therefore (as this word and the apostle's rule instruct us) 'Be temperate in all things,' 1 Cor. ix. 25. Intemperate excessive eaters, will be but moderate workers, especially in covenant-work. A little will satisfy their consciences, who are given up to satisfy their carnal appetites. 'And he who makes his belly his god, will not make much of the glory of God.'

So much concerning the nature of a covenant, from the original word; for a covenant, signifying both to chuse, and to eat. We may take in some further light to discover the things from the original word, which we translate (make) 'Let us make a covenant.'

That word signifies properly to cut, to strike, or to slay. The reason hereof is given, because at the making of solemn covenants, beasts were killed and divided afunder, and the covenant-makers went between the parts. When God made that first grand covenant with Abraham, he said unto him, 'Take an heifer of three years old, and a she-goat of three years old, &c. And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid all those pieces one against another,' &c. Gen. xv. 9, 10. At the seventeenth ver. Behold, a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp' (which latter was the token of God's presence for the deliverance of his people) passed between those pieces. In the xxxiv. of Jer. 18. ver. we have the like ceremony

in making a covenant, 'They cut the calf
'in twain, and passed between the parts
'thereof.' Upon this usage the phrase is
grounded of cutting or striking a covenant.
Psal. l. 5. Psal. lxxxix. 3. Which ceremony
had this signification in it, that when they
passed between those divided parts of the slain
beast, the action spake this curse or impre-
cation, * "Let him be cut asunder, let his
members be divided, let him be made as this
beast, who violatesthe oath of this covenant."

From these observations about the words,
we may be directed about the nature of the
thing: and thence collect this description of
a covenant. A covenant is a solemn compact
or argreement between two chosen parties
or more, whereby with mutual, free, and
full consent they bind themselves upon select
conditions, tending to the glory of God, and
their common good.

A covenant strictly considered, is more
than a promise, and less than an oath; unless
an oath be joined with it, as was with that
in the text, and is with this we have now
before us. A covenant differs from a pro-
mise gradually, and in the formalities of it,
not naturally, or in the substance of it. God
made promises to Abaham, Gen. xii. and
Gen. xiii. but he made no covenant with
him, till chap. xv. ver. 18. 'In that day the
'the Lord made a covenant with Abraham.
And the work of the Lord in that day with

* *Foedus facientes primo jurabant, postea transibant inter
partes pecudis; quasi dicerent discindatur, dividantur ejus
membra, fiat sicut pecus istud, qui Juramentum violaverit.*

Abraham, had not only truth and mercy in it, but state and majesty in it. A covenant day, is a solemn day. As the collection of many stars makes a constellation, so the collection of many promises makes a covenant. Or as in the first of Gen. ver. 10. 'The gathering together of the waters, was by the Lord called seas:' so we may call the gathering together of promises, or conditions, a covenant. The Lord doth (as it were) rally all the promises of mercy made to us, which lie scattered up and down through the whole volume of the scriptures, and puts them together into a covenant: and we do (as it were) rally all the promises of duty which we owe unto God, and to one another, and put them together in a covenant. Such a bundle of duty is tied up in this present covenant; what duty is there which we owe to God, to his churches, or these common-wealths whereof we make not promise, either expressly; or by consequence in the compass of this covenant? And how great an obligation to duty doth this contain, wherein there is an obligation to every duty?

Seeing then this covenant being taken, carries in it so great an obligation, it calls for great preparation before we take it. A lightness of spirit in taking this covenant, must needs cause a lightness of spirit in keeping it. All solemn duties, ought to have solemn preparations; and this I think, as solemn as any. A Christian ought to set his heart (as far as he can through the strength of Christ) into a praying frame, before he

kneels down to prayer. And we ought to set our hearts in a promising frame, before we stand up to make such mighty promises. 'Take heed how ye hear,' is our Saviour's admonition in the gospel; surely then we had need take heed how we swear, 'Let a man examine himself (saith the apostle Paul) and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup;' let him come examined to the sacrament: so I may say, "Let a man examine himself, before he lift up his hand or write down his name;" let him come examined to the covenant.

I shall briefly propose three heads of preparatory examination, respecting our entrance into this covenant.

First, Examine your hearts, and your lives whether or no you are not pre-engaged in any covenant contrary to the tenor and conditions of this covenant? If any such upon inquiry be found, be sure you avoid it, before you engage yourselves in this. A superstitious institution in this kind, is very dangerous. Every man must look to it, that he takes this covenant (*sede vacante*, or rather *corde vacante*) with a heart emptied of all covenants which are inconsistent with this. For a man to covenant with Christ and his people for reformation, &c. while he hath either taken a covenant with others, or made a covenant in his own breast against it, is desperate wickedness. Or if upon a self-search, you find yourselves clear of any such engagements, yet search further. Every man by nature is a covenanter with hell, and with every sin.

is at agreement: be sure you revoke and
cancel that covenant, before you subscribe
to it. 'If I regard iniquity in my heart, the
Lord will not hear my prayer;' that is, he
will not regard my prayers, (saith David)
Psalm lxxvi. 18. And if we regard iniquity in
our hearts, the Lord will not hear us cove-
nenting; that is, he will not regard our co-
venant. Wo be unto those who make this
league with God and his people, while they
resolve to continue their league with sin:
which is (upon the matter) a league with Sa-
tan. God and Satan will never meet in one
covenant. 'For what communion hath light
with darkness? and what concord hath
Christ with Belial?

2dly, Before you enter into this covenant
with God, consider of, and repent for this
capital sin, your former breaches and failings
of God's covenant. 'We who were some-
times afar off, aliens from the common-
wealth of Israel, and strangers from the
covenant of promise, are made nigh by the
blood of Jesus,' even so nigh, as to be in
covenant with God. Some who pretend to
this privilege, will be found 'Such as have
counted the blood of the covenant to be an
unholy thing.' Heb. x. 29. And where is
that man that walketh so holily in this cove-
nant as becomes him, and as it requires? la-
ther therefore to have those breaches healed
by a fresh sprinkling of the blood of Christ
upon your consciences, before you enter
into this covenant: If you put this new piece to
Numb. II.

an old garment, the rent will be made worse. If you put this new wine into old bottles, the bottles will break, and all your expected comforts will run out and be lost. If you should feel and search your own hearts, without doing the Lord will. 'And if you be found as receivers, you will bring a curse upon yourselves, and not a blessing' (as Jacob speaks in another case, Gen. xxvii. 12.) This is a covenant of amity with God: reconciliation must go before friendship, you can never make friendship till you have made peace, nor feel love, where hostility is unremoved.

3dly, Inquire diligently at your own hearts whether they come up indeed to the terms of this covenant? You must bid high for the honour of a covenanter, for a part in the privilege. Which of you, saith our Lord Christ to his hearers, Luke xiv. 28. 'tending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he hath sufficient to finish it? Lest haply after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it, begin to mock him, saying, this man began to build, and was not able to finish.' We are met this day to lay the foundation of one tower, and to pull up the foundation of another; we are pulling up the foundation of Babel's tower, and we are laying a foundation for Zion's tower. We have seen some who have heretofore done as much, but they have done no more; when they had laid a foundation, they those noble works in taking a solemn oath to the covenant, they have never moved a hand

either to build or to pull down, unless it
be quite cross to their own engagements, for
the pulling down of Zion's tower, and the
building of Babylon.

And what was the reason of this stand, or
contrary motion? this surely was one, they
did not gage their own hearts before hand,
neither did they sit down to count the cost
of such an undertaking. And therefore when
they perceived the charge to arise so high,
they neither could finish, nor would they endea-
vour it, but left the work before it looked above
the ground; and are justly become a mock
and a scorn and a reproach in Israel, these
were the men that began (in a solemn cove-
nant to build, but could not finish; they had
stock enough either of true honour or ho-
nour (tho' their stock of parts and opportu-
nities was sufficient) to finish this work.

Let us therefore sit down seriously and
count the cost; yea and consider whether we
are willing to be at the cost. To lead you on
in this, my humble advice is, that you would
examine your hearts upon the articles of this
covenant. Put the question to your hearts,
and let every one say thus unto himself:

Am I indeed resolved sincerely, really and
constantly, through the grace of God, in my
office and calling, to endeavour the preserva-
tion of the reformed religion in the church of
Scotland? &c. The reformation of religion in
the kingdoms of England and Ireland? &c.

Am I indeed resolved in like manner, with-
out respect of persons, to endeavour the ex-
termination of popery, prelacy? &c.

Am I indeed resolved never to be withdrawn or divided by whatsoever terror or persuasion from this blessed union and conjunction, whether to make defection to the contrary part, or to give myself to a detestable indifference or neutrality, in this cause of God? &c.

Am I indeed resolved to humble myself for my own sins, and the sins of the kingdom &c. to amend myself, and all in my power and to go before others in the example of real reformation? &c.

According to these hints, propose the question upon every clause of this covenant. And then consider what the cost of performing these may amount to, and whether you are willing to go to that cost.

But it may be, some will say, what is the cost? I answer, the express letter of the covenant tells you of one cost which you must be constantly at, and that is sincere, real, and constant endeavour. Pains is a price, I assure real pains is. The heathens said, "Their gods sold them all good things for labour." The good things of this covenant are sold at that rate; yea, this is the price which the true God puts upon those things which he freely gives. To consent to this covenant, to wish well to this covenant, to speak well of this covenant, come not up to the price; you must do these, and you must do more, you must be doing, so the promise of every man for himself runs, I will through the grace of God endeavour. Yet every endeavour is not current money, payable, as the price of this covenant; there must be a threefold stamp upon it. Un-

is it bear the image and superscription of sincerity, reality, and constancy, it will not be accepted. For so the promise runs, I will sincerely, really, and constantly endeavour. Neither yet is this all: such endeavours are virtually money; but this covenant calls also for money formally, as the price of it: he that really endeavours after such ends, as here is proposed, must not only be at the cost of his pains, but also at the cost of his purse for the attainment of them. He must open his hand to give and to lend, as well as to work and labour: unless a man be free of his purse, as well as of his pains, he bids not up to the demands of this covenant, nor pays up to his own promise, when he entered it. Can that man be said really to endeavour the maintenance of a cause, while he lets it starve? or to strengthen it, while he keeps the sinews of it close shut up? would he have the chariot move swiftly, who only draws, but will not set the wheels? know then, and consider it, that the cost you must be at, is both in your labours, and in your estates. The engagement runs to both these.

And to more than both these. This covenant engages us not only to do, but to suffer; not only to endeavour, but to endure. Such is the tenor of the sixth article, where every man promises for himself; that he will not suffer himself to be withdrawn from this blessed union, by any terrors. If not by any terror, then not by losses, imprisonments, tortments, no, nor by death, that king of terror.

You see then, that the price of this covenant may be the price of blood, of liberty, and of life. Sit down and consider, are you willing to be at this cost to build the tower through the goodness of God in ordering these great affairs, you may never come actually to pay down so much; haply, not half so much: but except you resolve (if called and put to it by the real exigencies of this cause) to pay down the utmost farthing, your spirits are too narrow, and your hearts too low for the honour and tenor of this covenant.

If any shall say these demands are very high, and the charge very great; but it is your part in this covenant worth it? will it quench the cost to be at so great a charge? wise men will love to see and have somewhat for their money; and when they see, they will not flinch at any cost, so the considerations be valuable.

For the answering and clearing of this I shall pass to the second point, which holds forth the grounds of a covenant from those words of the text, 'And be the cause of all this.' If any one shall be troubled at the all this, in the price, I doubt not but the all this in the grounds will satisfy him. 'Because of all this, we make a sure covenant.' Here observe,

1. A covenant must be grounded on reason; we must shew the cause why God offers, descends, but man is bound to give a reason of what he doth. Some of God's actions are above reason but none without reason. All our actions ought to be level with reason, and this with common reason; for it is a

common act. That which men of all capacities are called to do, should lie in the reach of every man's capacity. Observe

2. A covenant must be grounded on weighty reason; there must be much light in the reason (as was shewed before) but no lightness. 'Because of all this' saith the text. There were many things in it, and much weight in every one of them.

And the reasons in their proportion, must at least be as weighty as the conditions. Weighty conditions will never be balanced with light reasons. If a man ask a thousand pounds for a jewel, he is bound to demonstrate that his jewel is intrinsically worth so much, else no wise man will come up to his demands. So when great things are demanded to be paid down by all who take part in this covenant, we are obliged to demonstrate and hold forth an equivalence of worth in the grounds and nature of it. Hence observe

3. That the reasons of a covenant must be express, 'Because of all this.' This, is demonstrative. Here's the matter laid before you, consider of it, examine it thoroughly. This is fair dealing, when a man sees why he undertakes, and what he may expect, before he is engaged. And so may say, 'Because of this, and this, because of all this,' I have entered into the covenant.

But what were the particulars that made up the gross sum of all this? I answer, those particulars lie scattered throughout the chapter, the attentive reader will easily find them out; I shall in brief reduce them unto two heads.

1. The defection and corruptions that were crept in, or openly brought in among them.

2. The afflictions, troubles, and judgments that either were already fallen, or were feared would further fall upon them.

The former of these causes is laid down in the 34 and 35 verses of this chapter. 'Neither have our kings, our princes, our priests, nor our fathers kept thy law, nor hearkened to thy commandments, and thy testimonies, wherewith thou didst testify against them. For they have not served thee in thy kingdom, and in thy great goodness,' &c.

The latter of these reasons is contained in the 36 and 37 verses. 'Behold, we are servants this day; and for the land which thou gavest unto our fathers, to eat the fruit thereof, and the good thereof, behold, we are servants in it,' &c. The close of all is, we are in great distress. From this narrative of the grounds, the making of a covenant is inferred as a conclusion, in the immediate subsequent words of the text, 'because of all this.' As if he had said, "because we are a people who have so departed from the laws and statutes of our God, and are so corrupted both in worship, and in practice; because we are a people so oppressed in our estates, and liberties, and so distressed by judgments and afflictions: therefore, because of all this, we make a sure covenant."

And if we peruse the records of the holy scripture, we shall find, that either both these grounds conjoined, or one of them, are expressed as the reasons at any time inducing the

people of God, to enter into the bond of a covenant. This is evident in Aſa's covenant, Chron. xv. 12, 13. In Hezekiah's, 2 Chron. xxix. 10. In Joſiah's, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 30, 31. In Ezra's, chap. x. 3. of that book. To all which, I refer the reader for ſatisfaction. And from all conſenting with this in the text, I obſerve:

That when a people are corrupted or declined in doctrine, worſhip, and manners; when they are diſtreſſed in their liberties, livelihoods, or lives; then, and at ſuch a time they have warrantable and ſufficient grounds to make and engage themſelves (as their laſt and higheſt reſort for redreſs) in the bonds of a ſacred ſolemn covenant.

What engagement can be upon us, which theſe reaſons do not reach and answer? The liberty of our perſons, and of our eſtates, is worth much; but the liberty of the goſpel, the purity of doctrine and ordinances, are worth much more. Peace is a precious jewel, but who can value truth? The wiſe merchant will ſell all that he hath with joy to buy this, and bleſſes God for the bargain, Matth. xiii. 44.

And becauſe of all this, we are called to make a covenant this day. Truth of doctrine and purity of worſhip were going, and much of them both were gone. The liberty of our perſons, and property of our eſtates, were going, and much of them both were gone; we were at once growing popiſh and ſlavish, ſuperſtitious and ſervile; we were in theſe great diſtreſſes, ' And becauſe of all ' this we make a covenant this day.'

That these are the grounds of our covenant, is clear in the tenor of the covenant. The preamble whereof speaks thus:

“WE calling to mind the treacherous and bloody plots, conspiracies, attempts, and practices of the enemies of God, against the true religion and professors thereof, in all places, especially in these three kingdoms, ever since the reformation of religion; and how much their rage, power and presumption are of late, and at this time increased and exercised, whereof the deplorable estate of the church and kingdom of Ireland, the distressed estate of the church and kingdom of England, and the dangerous estate of the church and kingdom of Scotland, are present and public testimonies: we have now at the last, for the preservation of ourselves, and our religion, from utter ruin and destruction, &c. after mature deliberation resolved and determined to enter into a mutual and solemn league and covenant, &c.”

So then, if we be ask'd a reason of our covenant, here are reasons, clear reasons, easy to the weakest understanding, yea, open to every man's sense. Who amongst hath not felt these reasons? and how many have smarted their proof unto us? And as these reasons are so plain, that the most illiterate and vulgar understandings may conceive them; so they are so weighty and cogent, that the most subtile and sublime understandings cannot but be subdued to them; unless, because they are such masters of reason, they have resolved to obey none. And yet where con-

science is indeed unsatisfied, we should rather pity than impose, and labour to persuade, rather than violently to obtrude. Now seeing we have all this for the ground of a covenant, let us cheerfully and reverently make a sure covenant, which is the third point in the text, the property of this covenant: we make a sure covenant.

In the Hebrew, the word covenant is not exprest. The text runs only thus, we make a sure one, or a sure thing. Covenants are in their own nature and constitution, things of so much certainty and assurance, that by way of excellency, a covenant is called, a sure one, or an assurance. When a sure one is but named, a covenant must be understood. As, the Holy One is God, and the Holy One, and the Just, is Christ, Acts iii. 14. You may know whom the Holy Ghost means, when he saith 'The Holy One and the Just.' So the sure, one, is a covenant. You may know what they made, when the Holy Ghost saith, they made a sure one. Hence observe, that

A well grounded covenant is a sure, a firm, and an irrevocable act. When you have such an *all this*, (and such you have) as is here concentrated in the text, to lay into, or for the foundation of a covenant, the superstruction is *æternitati sacrum*, and must stand for ever.

A weak ground, is but a weak obligation; and a sinful ground, is no obligation. There is much sin in making a covenant upon sinful grounds, and there is more sin in keeping of it. But when the preservation of true religion, and the vindication of just

liberties meet in the ground-work, ye may swear and not repent; yea, if ye swear, ye must not repent. For because of all such things as these, we ought (if we make any, and that we ought) to make a sure covenant.

The covenant which God makes with man, is a sure covenant. Hence called a 'Covenant of salt,' Numb. xvii. 19. Because salt preserves from perishing and putrefaction. The covenant of God with man about temporal things, is called a 'Covenant of Salt, and a covenant for ever,' 2 Chron. xv. 3. For tho' his covenant about temporal things (as all temporals must) hath an end of termination, yet it hath no end of corruption: time will conclude it, but time cannot violate it. But as for his covenant about eternal things, that, like eternity, knows not only no end of corruption, but none of termination. 'Altho' my house (saith gasping David) 'be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire altho' he make it not to grow,' 2. Sam. xxiii. 5. And what is it that makes the covenant of God with man thus sure? sure not only in itself, but (as the apostle speaks) to all the seed, Rom. iv. 16. Is it not this, because it hath a strong foundation, a double, impregnable foundation? *First*, His own free grace. *2dly*, The blood of Christ; which is therefore also called, the blood of the covenant, Heb. x. 29. Because of all this, this all, which hath an infinity in it, the Lord God hath made with us a sure covenant.

Now as the stability and everlastingness of God's covenant with his elect, lies in the strength of the foundation, 'his own love, and the blood of his son:' so the stability and firmness of our covenant with God, lies in the strength of this foundation, the securing of the gospel, and the asserting of gospel-purity in worship, and privileges in government; the securing of our lives, and the asserting of our common liberties. When at any time ye can question, and, from the oracles of truth, be resolved, that these are sufficient grounds of making a covenant, or that these are not ours, ye may go, and unassure the covenant which ye make this day.

Application. Let me therefore invite you in the words of the prophet Jeremiah, Chap. 1. 'Come let us join ourselves to the Lord, in a perpetual covenant that shall never be forgotten.' And do not these look like the days wherein the prophet calls to the doing of this? 'In those days, and at that time, saith the Lord,' ver. 4. What time, and what days were those? the beginning of the chapter answers it. 'The word that the Lord spake against Babylon, &c. declare ye among the nations, and publish, and set up a standard, publish and conceal not: say, Babylon is taken, Bell is confounded, Merodach is broken in pieces; her idols are confounded, her images are broken in pieces: for out of the north there cometh up a nation against her, which shall make her land desolate,' &c. Then follows, 'In those days Numb. II.

‘ and at that time saith the Lord, the children
 ‘ of Israel shall come, &c. And they shall a
 ‘ the way to Zion, with their faces thither
 ‘ ward saying, Come, and let us join ou
 ‘ selves to the Lord, in a perpetual covenan
 ‘ that shall not be forgotten.’

Are not these the days, and this the time
 (I speak not of time to a day, but of time
 and days) wherein the Lord speaks against
 Babylon, and against the land of the Chaldeans:
 wherein he saith, ‘ Declare among
 ‘ the nations, and publish, and set up
 ‘ a standard.’ Are not these the days, and this
 the time, when out of the north there comes
 up a nation against her? as face answers face
 in the water, so do the events of these days
 answer, if not the letter, yet much of the me-
 tery of this prophecy. There seems wanting
 only the work which this day is bringing forth,
 and a few days more (I hope) will bring us to
 perfection, the joining of ourselves in a per-
 petual covenant, never to be forgotten. It is
 very observable, how the prophet, as it were,
 with one breath saith, ‘ Babylon is taken,’ ver.
 2. And, ‘ Come let us join ourselves in a
 ‘ covenant,’ ver. 5. As if there were no more
 in it but this, take the covenant, and yet take
 Babylon. Or, as if the taking of a covenant
 were the ready way, the readiest way to take
 Babylon. Surely at the report of the taking
 of this sure covenant, we in our prayer-vision
 (as the prophet Habakkuk in his chap.
 7.) ‘ May see the tents of Cushan in affliction
 ‘ and the curtains of the land of Midian trem-
 ‘ ble.’ Or as Moses in his triumphant song

xod. xv. 14. 'The people shall hear, and be afraid: sorrow shall take hold of the inhabitants of Palestina. The dukes of Edom shall be amazed; the mighty men of Moab, trembling shall take hold upon them; the inhabitants of Canaan (who are now the inhabitants of Babylon) shall melt away. The towers of Babylon shall quake, and her seven hills will move. The great mountain before our Zerubbabel, will become a plain, and we shall bring forth the head-stone (of our reformation) with shouting, crying, grace; grace unto it.' Zech. iv. 7. Why may we not promise to ourselves such glorious effects (and not build these castles in the air) when we have laid so promising a foundation, this sure covenant, and have made a perpetual covenant, never to be forgotten?

Three things I shall propose, which this covenant will bring in, as facilitating contributions to so great a work:

1. This covenant will distinguish men, and separate the precious from the vile. In the twentieth chapter of Ezekiel, the Lord propheseth his people, after this manner, 'I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant,' ver. 37. That phrase of causing to pass under the rod, is an allusion to shepherds, or the keepers of cattle, who when they would take special notice of their sheep or cattle, either in their number to tithe them, or in their goodness to try them, they brought them into a fold, or some other inclosed

place, when letting them pass out at a narrow door, one by one, they held a rod over them, to count or consider more distinctly of them. This action was called a 'passing of them under the rod,' as Moses teaches us, Lev. xxvii. 32. 'And concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock, even of whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the Lord.' The learned Junius expounds that text in Ezekiel, by this in Leviticus, giving the sense thus, 'As if the Lord had said, I will prove and try the whole people of Israel, as a shepherd doth his flock, that I may take the good and sound into the fold of my covenant, and cast out the wicked and unsound.' Which interpretation is not only favoured, but fully approved, in the words immediately following, ver. 38. 'I will bring you into the bond of the covenant, and I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me.'

A covenant is to a nation, as a fan to the floor, which purges away the chaff, and purifies the wheat. It is like the furnace to the metal, which takes away the dross, and shews you a refined lump. It is a Shibboleth, to distinguish Ephraimites from Gileadites, Judges xii. 6. And who knows not how great an advantage it is for the successful carrying on of any honourable design, to know friends from enemies, and the faithful from false brethren? Some have thought it unpolitical to set a foot this covenant, lest it should discover more enemies than friends, and so

holding out to the view, more than otherwise can be seen, the weakness of a party may render them, not only more obnoxious, but more inconsiderable.

To this I answer, in a word, invisible enemies will ever do us more hurt than visible; and if we cannot deliver ourselves from them, when they are seen and known, doubtless unseen and unknown, they will more easily, tho' more insensibly devour us. And I verily believe, we have already received more damage and deeper wounds from pretended friends, than from profest and open enemies. The sad stories of Abner and Amasa inform us, that there is no fence against his stroke, who comes too near us, who stabs while he takes us aside to speak kindly to us, who draws his sword, while he hath a kiss at his lips, and art thou in health my brother, at his tongue. Let us never think ourselves stronger, because we do not know our weakness; or safer, because we are ignorant of our danger. Or that our real enemies and false friends will do us less hurt, because they are less discovered. I do not think, that a flock ever fared the better, because the wolves that were amongst them, went in sheep's cloathing. Rather will our knowledge of our security, and the discovery which this covenant makes, help on both our deliverance and our business. For as, possibly this covenant may discover those who are faithful to be fewer, than was supposed before this strict distinction from others; so it will certainly make them stronger than they were before, by a strict-

ter union among themselves. And this

The second benefit of this covenant, which I shall next insist upon. As it doth separate those who are heterogeneous, so likewise it will congregate and embody those who are homogeneous. And therefore it cannot but add strength unto a people; for whatsoever unites, strengthens. A few united, are stronger than a scattered multitude. Tho' they who subscribe this covenant should be, comparatively, so few, as the prophet speaks, Isa. x. 19. 'That a child may write them;' yet this few thus united, are stronger than so many scattered ones, as exceed all arithmetic, whom (as John speaks,) Rev. vii. 9. 'No man can number. Cloven tongues were sent,' Acts ii. 3. to publish the gospel, but not divided tongues, much less divided hearts: the former hindered the building of Babel, Gen. xi. 7. and the latter, tho' tongues should agree, will hinder the building of Jerusalem. Then a work goes on amain, when the undertakers, whether they be few or many, speak all, and think the same thing. A people are more considerable in any work, because they are one, than because they are many. But when many and one meet, nothing can stand before them. So the Lord God observed, when 'he came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded,' Gen. xi. 5. And the Lord said, (at the sixth ver.) 'Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language: and this they begin to do; and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do.' Men may do as

much as they can think, while they all think and do as one; and not only can such do great things, if let alone; but none can let them in doing what they intend; so saith the Lord in Gen. xi. 6. 'They have begun to do, and nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined.' Nothing could restrain, or let them from their work, but his power, who 'will work, and none can let it,' Isa. xliii. 13. Thus it is apparent, that union is our strength. And it is as apparent, that this covenant, through the blessing of God upon it, will be our union. To unite, is the very nature of a covenant. Hence Ezek. xx. 37. It is called 'the bond of the covenant, I will bring you into the bond of the covenant,' saith the Lord. Junius and some others render it, I will bring you (*ad exhibitionem fœderis*) to the giving or tendering of the covenant: deriving the word from *Masar*, signifying, to exhibit or deliver. Whence (to note that in passage) the traditionary doctrine among the Jews, is called *Masora*, or *Masoreth*. Others (whom our translators follow, and put the former sense, delivering, in the margin) others, I say, deriving the word from *Masar* to bind, render it the bond of the covenant.

And this covenant, is the bond of a twofold union. *First*, It unites us of this kingdom among ourselves, and this kingdom with the other two. *2dly*, It makes a special union of all those who shall take it holily and sincerely throughout the three kingdoms with the one-most God. Weak things bound toge-

ther, are strong, much more then, when strong are bound up with strong; most of all, when strong are bound up with Almighty. If in this covenant, we should only join weak to weak, we might be strong. But, blessed be God, we join strong, as creatures may be accounted strong with strong. The strong kingdoms of England and Ireland, with the strong kingdom of Scotland. A threefold cord twisted of three such strong cords, will not easily, if at all, be broken. They which single, blessed be God, have yet such strength, how strong may they be when conjoined? as the apostle writes to the Romans, chap. vi. 19. 'I speak after the manner of men, because of the infirmity of our flesh:' so I speak now after the manner of men, concerning the strength of our flesh, outward means, in these kingdoms. For as the apostle Peter speaks in like phrase, tho' to another occasion, 2 Pet. iii. 9. 'The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness:' so, I may say, no man, no kingdoms, are strong to any purpose, as the Lord counts strength.

And therefore, I reckon this the least part of our strength, that these three strong kingdoms will be united by this covenant: Nay, if this were all the strength, which this union were like to make, I should reckon this no strength at all. Wherefore know, that this covenant undoubtedly is, and will be a bond of union between strong and Almighty: between three strong nations, and an Almighty God. This covenant engages more than

man, God also is engaged; engaged, through his free grace, in his power, wisdom, faithfulness, to do us good, and much good, tho' we and of ourselves unworthy of the least, unworthy of any good.

All this considered, this covenant will be our strength: our brethren of Scotland, have, in a plentiful experience, found it so already. This covenant, thro' the blessing of God upon their counsels and endeavours, hath been their Samson's lock, the thing in sight, whereon their strength lieth. And why should not we hope, that it will be ours; if we can be wise, as they, to prevent or overcome the flattering enticements of those Delilahs, who would lull us asleep in their laps, only for an opportunity to cut or shave it off? Then indeed, which God forbid, we should be but weak, like other men, yea, weaker than ourselves were before this lock was grown, having but the strength of man; God utterly departing from us, for our falseness and unfaithfulness in this covenant.

3. This covenant observed, will make us a holy people, and then, we cannot be an unhappy people. That which promotes personal holiness, must needs promote national holiness. The consideration that we are in the bonds of a covenant, is both a bridle to stop us from sin, and a spur to duty. When we provoke God to bring evil upon us, he stays his hand by considering his covenant. 'I will remember my covenant saith the Lord, Gen. ix. 15. which is between me, and you; and every living creature of all flesh; and the

‘waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh.’ As if the Lord had said, It is more than probable, that I shall quickly see as much cause, ‘all flesh corrupting all their ways before me,’ to drown the world with a second deluge, as I did for the first: the foulness of the world, will quickly call for another washing. But I am resolved, never to destroy it by water again; for, ‘I will remember my covenant.’ Hence also in the second book of the Chronicles, chap. xxi. where the reign and sins of Jehoram are recorded; such sins as might justly put a sword into the hand of God to cut him off root and branch: howbeit, saith the text, ver. 7. ‘The Lord would not destroy the house of David, because of the covenant that he had made with David, and as he promised to give a light to him, and to his sons forever.’ Now, as the remembrance of the covenant on his part, stays the hand of God from smitting; so the remembrance of the covenant on our part, will be very effectual to stay our hands, and tongues, and hearts from sinning. A thought of that will damp and silence our lusts and passions, when they begin to move or quest within us: it will also break the blow of Satan’s temptations, when he assaults us. The soul in such cases will answer, true, I am now as strongly tempted to sin as ever, I have now as fair an opportunity to commit this sin as ever, I could now be false to, and desert this cause with as much advantage, upon as fair hopes, and promises as ever: O but I am in covenant, I remember my cove

nant, I will not, I cannot do it; and so he falls a praying against the temptation: yea, he begs prayers of others, that he may be strengthened against, and overcome it. I read you an instance of this effect before the sermon, a paper is sent to this congregation, containing this request: "One who through much passion oftentimes grievously offends the Majesty of God by cursing and swearing, and that since his late taking the covenant, desires the prayers of this congregation, that his offence may be pardoned, and that he may be enabled to overcome that temptation from hence forwards." This is the tenor of that request, to a letter and a title, and therein you see, how the remembrance of the covenant wrought. Probably this party (whosoever he was) took little notice of, or was little troubled at the notice of these distempers in himself before; least of all sought out for help against them; And I have the rather inserted this to confute that scorn which, I hear, some have since put upon that conscientious desire. As if one had complained, that since his swearing to the covenant he could not forbear swearing, and that this sacred oath had taught him profane ones. But what holy thing is there, which wine will not make mire of, for themselves to wallow in? I return, and I nothing doubt, but that this covenant, wherein all is undertaken through the grace of Christ, will make many more gracious, who had grace before, and turn others, who were running on a main the broad way, from the evil and error of their ways, into the way which is called holy,

or into the ways of holiness. Every act where in we converse with an holy God, hath an influence upon our spirits to make us holy. The soul is made more holy in prayer, tho' holiness be not the particular matter of the prayer: a man gets much of heaven into his heart, in praying for earthly things, if he pray in a spiritual manner; and the reason is because in prayer, he hath converse with, and draws nigh to God, whatsoever lawful thing he prays about. And the same reason carries it in covenanting, tho' it were only about the maintenance of our outward estates and liberties, forasmuch as therein we have to do with God. How much more then will holiness be increased through this covenant, which in many branches of it, is a direct covenant for, and about holiness? And if we improve it home to this purpose, for the subduing of those mystical Canaanites, those worst and indeed most formidable enemies, our sinful lusts, if we improve it for the obtaining of more grace, and the making of us more holy: tho' our visible Canaanites should not only continue unsubdued by us, but subdue us; though our estates and liberties should continue, not only unrecovered, but quite lost; tho' we should neither be a rich, nor a free, nor a victorious people; yet if we are an holy people, we have more than all these, we have all, he is ours, 'who is all in all.'

So much of the first general part of the application.

The second is for admonition and caution, in three or four particulars.

1. Take heed of 'profaning this covenant,' Mal. ii 8. by an unholy life. Remember you have made a covenant with heaven; then do not live as if you had made a 'covenant with hell or were come to an agreement with death,' as the prophet Isaiah characters those monsters of profaneness, chap. xxviii.

5. Take heed also of 'corrupting this covenant,' Mal. ii. 10. by an unholy gloss. Wo be unto those glossers that corrupt the text, pervert the meaning of these words: who attempt to expound the covenant by their own practice, and will not regulate their practice by the covenant. The apostle Peter speaks of Paul's writings, 'That in them some things are hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, to their own destruction,' 2 Pet. iii.

6. We may fear, that tho' the text of this covenant be easy to be understood, yet some who, at least think themselves) learned, and whom we have found not only stable, but stiffened in their own erroneous principles and opinions will be trying their skill, if not their malice, to wrest, or as the Greek [*streblousi*] imports, to torture and set this covenant upon the rack, to make it speak and confess a sense never intended by the composers, or proposers of it: and whereof (if but common ingenuity be the judge) it never will, nor can be found guilty. All that I shall say to such, is that in the close of the verse quoted from the apostle Peter, let them take heed

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such wrestlings be not (worst to themselves, even) to their own destruction.

2. Take heed of delaying to perform the duties of this covenant. Some, I fear, who have made haste to take the covenant, will take leisure to act it. It is possible, that a man may make too much haste (when he swears, before he considers what it is) to take an oath; but having taken it, upon due consideration, he cannot make too much haste to perform it. 'Be not rash with thy mouth,' saith the preacher, Eccles. v. 2. That is, do not vow rashly, but, ver. 4. 'When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it: for he hath no pleasure in fools; (slow performance is folly) pay that which thou hast vowed.' Speedy paying (like speedy giving) is double payment; whereas slow payment, is no payment or as bad as none, for it is foolish payment. A bond, if I mistake not, is presently due in law, if no day be specified in the bond. It is so I am sure in this covenant; here is no day set down, and therefore all is due the same day you take it. God and man may sue this bond presently for none payment: the covenant gives no day, and therefore requires the next day, every day. It is not safe to take day for payment, when the obligation is *in terminis de præsenti*, and none is given.

3. Take heed of dallying with this covenant: It is more than serious, a sacred covenant. It is very dangerous jesting with edged tools. This covenant is as keen as it is strong. Do not play fast and loose with it, be not in and out with it; 'God is an avenger of all

such: he is a jealous God, and will not hold them guiltless, who thus take his name in vain. They who swear by, or to the Lord, and swear by Malcham, are threatened to be cut off,' Zeph. i. 5. To be on both sides, and to be on no side; neutrality and indifference differ little, either in their sin or danger.

4. Above all, take heed of apostatizing from, or an utter desertion of this covenant. To be deserted of God, is the greatest punishment, and to desert God, is the greatest sin. When you have set your hands to the plough, do not look back: remember Lot's wife. Besides the sin, this is, *First*, Extremely base and dishonourable. It is one of the brands set upon those Gentiles, whom 'God had given up to a reprobate mind, and to vile affections,' Rom. i. 26, 28. that they were covenant-breakers. And who base is that issue which is begotten between, and born from vile affections, and a reprobate mind? where the parents are such, it is easy to judge what the child must be. *2dly*, Besides the sin and the dishonour, this is extremely dangerous and destructive. We are said in the native speaking, to cut a covenant, or to 'strike a covenant,' when we make it; and if we break the covenant when we have made it, it will both strike and cut us, it will kill and slay us. If the cords of this covenant do not bind us, the cords of this covenant will whip us; and whip us, not as with cords, but as with scorpions. The covenant will have a quarrel with, and sends out a challenge unto such breakers of

it, for reparation. And (if I may so speak) the great God will be its second. As God revenges the quarrel of his own covenant, so likewise the quarrel of ours. He hath already 'Sent a sword to revenge the quarrel of his covenant,' Lev. xxvi. 25. He will send another to revenge the quarrel of this upon the wilful violaters of it. Yea, every lawful covenant hath a curse always waiting upon it, like a marshal or a serjeant, to attack such high contemners of it. It was noted before, from the ceremony of killing dividing and passing between the divided parts of a beast, when covenants were made, that the imprecation of a curse upon the covenanters was implied, in case they wilfully transgressed or revolted from it. Let the transgressors of, and revolters from this covenant fear and tremble at the same curse, even the curse of a dreadful division: 'That God will divide them and their posterity in Jacob, and scatter them in our Israel; yea, let them fear that God will rebuke them, and they shall flee far off, and shall be chased as the chaff of the mountains before the wind, and like a rolling thing before the whirlwind. This is (their portion, and) the portion of them that spoil us, and the lot of them that rob us, Isa. xvii. 13, 14. And if so, is not their lot fallen in an unpleasant place? have they not a dreadful heritage? to be under any curse is misery enough; but to be under a covenant curse, is the greatest, is all misery. For as the blessings we receive are most sweet, when they pass to us through the hands of a covenant

mercy from a promise, is far better than a mercy from bare providence, because then it is sprinkled with the blood of Christ: so on the other side, the curse which falls upon any one, is far more bitter, when it comes through a covenant, especially an abused, a broken covenant. When the fiery beams of God's wrath are contracted into this burning glass, it will burn as low as hell, and none can quench it. That alone which quenches the fire of God's wrath is the blood of Christ. And the blood of Christ is the foundation of this covenant. Not only is that covenant which God hath made with us, founded in the blood of Christ, but that also which we make with God. Were it not by the blood of Christ, we could not possibly be admitted to so high a privilege. Seeing then the blood of Christ only quenches the wrath of God, and his blood is the foundation of our covenant, how shall the wrath of God (except they repent, return and renew their covenant) be quenched towards such violators of it? and as our Saviour speaks, Matth. vi. 23. upon another occasion, 'If the light which is in us be darkness, how great is that darkness?' I say, if that which is our friend, turn upon us as an enemy, how great is that enmity; and if that which is our mercy, be turned into wrath, how great is that wrath, and who can quench it? It is said of good king Josiah, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 32. that when he had made a covenant before the Lord, 'he caused all that were present in Jerusalem,

‘and in Benjamin to stand to it.’ How far this he interposed his regal authority, I stay not to dispute. But he caused them to stand to it, that is openly to attest, and to maintain it. Methinks the consideration of these things should reign over the hearts of men, and have command in their spirits, more than any prince can over the tongues or bodies of men, to cause them to stand to this covenant. Ye that have taken this covenant, unless ye stand to it, ye will fall by it. I shall shut up this point with that of the apostle, ‘Take ye unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and when ye have done all, to stand.’ Eph. vi. 13. Stand, and withstand, are the watchword of this covenant, or the impression of every heart which hath, or shall sincerely swear unto it.

For the helping of you to stand to this covenant, I shall cast in a few advices about your walking in this covenant, or your carriage in it, which if followed, I dare say through the mercy of the Most High, you and your persons, these kingdoms, and this cause, shall not miscarry.

1. Walk in holiness and uprightness. When God renewed his covenant with Abraham, he makes this the preamble of it, ‘I am the Almighty God, walk before me, and be thou perfect, and I will make my covenant between me and thee,’ Gen. xv. 1, 2. As this must be a covenant of faithfulness, regard of faithfulness; so there must be faithfulness.

this covenant, even the salt of holiness and
uprightness. The Jews were commanded in
all their offerings to use salt; and that is cal-
led the salt of the covenant, Lev. ii. 13.
Every oblation of thy meat-offering shalt
thou season with salt; neither shalt thou suf-
fer the salt of the covenant of thy God to be
lacking,' &c. What is meant by salt on our parts,
as taught us by Christ himself, Mark ix. 50.
Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one
with another.' Which I take to be parallel
in sense with that of the apostle, Heb. xii. 14.
Follow peace with all men and holiness,'
&c. As salt, the shadow of holiness, was cal-
led for, in all those Jewish services; so holi-
ness, the true substantial salt, is called for in
all ours. As then it was charged, 'Let not
the salt of the covenant of thy God be lack-
ing:' So now it is charged? 'Suffer not the
salt of thy covenant with God and his peo-
ple to be lacking.' Seeing we have made a
covenant of salt, that is, a sure covenant, let
us remember to keep salt in our covenant.
Let us add salt to salt, our salt to the Lord's
salt, our salt of holiness, to his salt of faithful-
ness, and we shall not miscarry.

2. Walk steadily or stedfastly in this cove-
nant. Where the heart is upright and holy,
the feet will be steady. Unstedfastness is a
sure argument of unsoundness, as well as a
fruit of it. 'Their heart was not right with
him; neither were they stedfast in his cove-
nant,' Psal. lxxviii. 37. As if he had said,
would you know the reason why this people

were so unstedfast? It was, because they were so unsound. 'Their heart was not right with him.' We often see the diseases of men's hearts breaking forth at their lips, and at their finger's ends, in all they say or do.

Then, be hearty, and be steady. God will be steady to us; why should not we resolve to be so to him? and this covenant will be stedfast and uniform unto us, why should not we resolve to be so too, and in this covenant? The covenant will not be our friend to-day, and our enemy to-morrow, dous good to-day, and hurt to-morrow, it will no the fruitful this year, and barren the next; but it is our friend to do us good to-day, and ever. It is fruitful, and will be so for ever. We need not let it lie fallow, we cannot take out the heart of it, tho' we should have occasion to plough it, and sow it every year. Much less will this covenant be so unstedfast to its own principles, as to yield us wheat to-day, and cockle to-morrow, an egg to-day, and to-morrow a scorpion; now bread, and anon a stone; now give us an embrace, and anon a wound; now help on our peace, and anon embroil us; now prosper our reformation, and anon oppose, or hinder it; strengthen us this year, and weaken us the next. No, as it will never be barren, so it will ever bring forth the same fruit, and that good fruit; and the more and the longer we use it, the better fruit. Like the faithful wife, Prov. xxxi. 12. 'It will do us good, and not evil, all the days of its life.' It is therefore, not only sinful,

at most unsuitable and uningenious, for us to be up and down, forward and backward, loving and disliking, like that double minded man, James i. 8. 'Unstable in all our ways,' neglecting the duties of this covenant.

3. Walk believably, live much in the exercise of faith. As we have no more good out of the covenant of God, than we have faith in it; so no more good out of our own, than we have in a due sense) we have faith in it. There is as much need of faith, to improve this covenant, as there is of faithfulness. We live more in the sphere of a covenant, than we do in the exercise of it. And we can make no living out of it but by believing. All our earnings come in by faith. We are also, more by our faith, than by our works. Let not the heart of God be straitened, and his hand shortened by our unbelief. There Christ marvelled at the unbelief of a people, consider what a marvel followed: 'He could do no mighty works among them,' Mark vi. 6. Works less than mighty, will not reach our deliverances, or procure our mercies. The ancient worthies made more use of their faith, than to be saved, and get to heaven by it. 'By faith the walls of an opposing Jericho fell down, (Heb. xi. 30.) By faith they subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, (or exercised justice) stopped the mouths of lions, (ver. 33.) By faith they quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness they were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens,'

ver. 24. We have Jericho's to reduce, and kingdoms to subdue, under the sceptre and government of Jesus Christ: we have justice to execute, and the mouths of lions to stop; we have a violent fire to quench, a sharpedged sword to escape, Popish alien armies to fight with; and we (comparatively to these mighty works) are but weak. How then shall we out of our weakness become strong, strong enough to carry us through these mighty works, strong enough to escape these visible dangers, if we walk and work by sense, and not by faith? And if we could get through all these works and dangers without faith, we should work but like men, not at all like Christians, but like men in a politic combination, not in a holy covenant. There is not a stroke of covenant work (purely so called) can be done without faith. As fire is to the chymist, so is faith to a covenant people: In that capacity, they can do nothing for themselves without it; and they have, they can have no assurance that God will. Seeing then we are in covenant, we must go to counsel by faith, and to war by faith; we must pull down by faith, and build by faith; we must reform by faith, and settle our peace by faith. Besides, to do a work so solemn and sacred, and then not to believe and expect no fruit; yea, then to believe and expect answerable fruit, is a direct taking of God's name in vain, and a mock to Jesus Christ. And if we mock Christ by calling him to a covenant, which we ourselves flight, as a thing we expect little or nothing from: 'He will laugh

our calamity, and 'mock when our fear cometh,' Prov. i. 26. Wherefore to close, 'If ye will not believe, 'surely ye shall not be established,' Isa. vii. 9. no, not by this sure covenant. But, 'believe in the Lord your God, in covenant, so shall you be established; believe his prophets, so shall you prosper,' 2 Chron. xx. 20.

3. Walk cheerfully. So it becomes those that have God so near them. Such, even in their sorrows, should be, like Paul, 2 Cor. vi. 10. 'As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing.' The apostle notes not a counterfeiting of sorrow, but the overcoming of sorrow. On this ground David resolves against the fear of evil, tho' he should see nothing but evil; 'Tho' I walk in the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me,' Psal. xxiii. 4. In a covenant, God and man meet; he is with us, who is more than all that are against us: and when he is with us, who can be against us? Rom. viii. 31. For then all things, and all persons, even while (to the utmost of their skill and power) they set themselves against us, work for us; and should not we rejoice? We knew that every loss were our gain, every wound our healing, every disappointment our success, every defeat our victory, should we not rejoice? do but know what it is to be in covenant with God; and be sad, be hopeless if you can. It is to have the strength and counsels of heaven engaged for you; it is to have him for you, 'Whose foolishness is wiser than men, and whose weakness is stronger than men,' 1 Cor. i. 25. It

is to have him with you, 'who doth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, what dost thou?' Dan. iv. 35. It is to have him with you, 'who frustrateth the token of the liars, and maketh the diviners mad; who turneth wise men backward, and maketh their knowledge foolish,' Isa. xlv. 2. It is to have him with you, before whom 'the nations are as the drop of a bucket, and the dust of the balance, who taketh up the isles as a very little thing,' Isa. xl. 15. In a word, it is to have him with you, 'who fainteth not, neither is weary; there is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might, he increaseth strength,' ver. 29. This God is our God, our God in covenant; 'This is our beloved and this is our friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.' And shall we not rejoice? Shall we not walk cheerfully? tho' their be nothing but trouble before our eyes, yet our hearts should live in those upper regions, which are above storms and tempests, above rain and winds, above the noise and confusions of the world. Why should sorrow sit clouded in our faces, or darkness be in our hearts, while we are in the shine and light of God's countenance? It is said, 2 Chron. xv. 15. 'That all Judah rejoiced at the oath; for they had sworn with all their heart:' If we have sworn heartily, we shall rejoice heartily. And we shall ever banish base fears, and killing sorrow

from our hearts; and wipe them from our
aces. They, who have unworthy fears in
their hearts, give too fair an evidence, that
they did not swear with their hearts.

5. Walk humbly and dependantly; rejoice,
but be not secure. Trust to God in covenant,
not to your covenant. Make not your cove-
nant, your Christ; no, not for this temporal
salvation. As a horse trusted to, is a vain
thing to save a man, Psal. xxxii. so likewise
a covenant trusted to; neither can it deliv-
er a nation by its great strength: tho' indeed
the strength of it be greater, than the strength
of many horses. 'In vain is salvation hoped
for from this hill, or from a multitude of
mountains,' heaped up and joined in one by
the bond of this covenant. Surely in the Lord
our God, our God in covenant, is the salva-
tion of England. We cannot trust too much
in God, nor too little in the creature; there
is nothing breaks the staff of our help, but
our leaning upon it. If we trust in our cove-
nant, we have not made it with God, but we
have made it a god; and every god of man's
making, is an idol, and so nothing in the
world: you see, pride in, or trust to this co-
venant, will make it an idol, and then in do-
ing all this, we have done nothing; for 'an
idol is nothing in the world,' 1 Cor. viii. 4.
And of nothing, comes nothing. By over-
looking to the means, we lose all; and by all
our travel shall bring forth nothing but wind:
it will not work any deliverance in the land.
Therefore, 'rest not in the thing done, but
Numb. II.

T

‘yet up, and be doing,’ which is the last point and my last motion about your walking in covenant.

6. Walk industriously and diligently in the covenant. You were counselled before to stand to the covenant, but take heed of standing in it. Stand, as that is opposed to defection; but if you stand as that is opposed to action, you are at the next door to falling. A total neglect, is little better than total apostacy.

We have made a perpetual covenant, never to be forgotten, as was shewed out of the prophet. It is a rule, that words in scripture which express only an act of memory, include action and endeavours. When a young man is warned to ‘remember his Covenant in the days of his youth,’ Eccles. xii. he is also charged to love, and to obey his God. And while we say, this covenant is never to be forgotten; we mean, the duties of it are ever to be pursued, and, to the utmost of our power, fulfilled. As soon as it is said, that Josiah made all the people stand to the covenant; the very next words are, ‘and the inhabitants of Jerusalem did according to the covenant of God, the God of their fathers.’ 2 Chron. xxxiv. 32. They stood to it, but they did not like those, Matth. xx. 6. ‘stand all the day idle;’ they fell to work presently. And so let us. Having laid this foundation of our covenant, now let us arise and build, and let our hands be strong. Do not think that all is done, when this solemnity is done.

is a sad thing to observe, how some, when they have lifted up their hands, and written down their names, think presently their work is over. They think, now surely they have satisfied God and man, for they have subscribed the covenant.

I tell you, nay, for when you have done taking the covenant, then your work begins. When you have done taking the covenant, then you must proceed to acting the covenant. When an apprentice hath subscribed his name, and sealed his indentures, doth he then think his service is ended? No, then he knows his service doth begin. It is so here. We are all sealing the indentures of a sacred and noble apprenticeship to God, to these churches and common-wealths; let us then go to our work, as bound, yet free. Free to our work, not from it; free in our work, working from a principle of holy ingenuity, not of servility, or constraint. The Lord threatens them with bondage and captivity, who will not be servants in their covenant, with readiness and activity. 'I, saith the Lord, will give the men that have transgressed my covenant, which have not performed the words of the covenant, which they had made before me, when they cut the calf in twain, and passed between the parts thereof; the princes of Judah, and the princes of Jerusalem, the eunuchs, and the priests, and all the people of the land, which passed between the parts of the calf, I will even give them into the hand of their enemies,

‘ and into the hand of them that seek the
 ‘ life, and their dead bodies shall be meat
 ‘ the fowls of the air, and the beasts of the
 ‘ earth.’ Words that need no rhetoric
 to press them, nor any comment to explain
 them: they are so plain, that every one may
 understand them; and so severe, that every
 one, who either transgresses, or performs not
 who doth any thing against, or nothing for
 the words of this covenant, hath just cause
 to tremble at the reading of them: I am sure, to
 feel them, will make him tremble. Seeing
 then our princes, our magistrates, our mini-
 sters, and our people, have freely consented
 to, written, and sworn this covenant; let
 all in our several places, up and be doing, that
 the Lord may be with us; not sit still and do
 nothing, and so cause the Lord to turn
 against us.

You that are for consultation, go to coun-
 sel; you that are for execution, go on to ac-
 ting; you that are for exhorting the people
 in this work, attend to exhortation; you that
 are soldiers, draw your swords; you that
 have estates, draw your purses; you that have
 strength of body, lend your hands; and all
 you that have honest hearts, lend your prayers,
 your cries, your tears, for the prosperous
 success of this great work. And the Lord
 prosper the works of all our hands, the Lord
 prosper all our handy-works. *Amen.*

THE
QUARREL
OF THE
COVENANT,
WITH THE
PACIFICATION
OF THE
QUARREL.

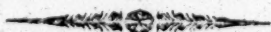
DELIVERED IN THREE SERMONS

ON LEV. XXVI. 25. and JER. I. 5.

By the Rev. Mr. THOMAS CASE,
one of the Members of the Westminster Assembly of
Divines.

2 CHRON. XXIII. 16. *And Jehoiadab made a covenant between him, and between all the people, and between the king, That they should be the Lord's people.*

NEH. X. 28, 29. *And the rest of the people, the priests, the Levites, the porters, the singers, the Nethinims, and all they that had separated themselves from the people of the lands, into the law of God, their wives, their sons, and their daughters, every one having knowledge, and having understanding. They clave to their brethren, their nobles, and entered into a curse, and into an oath, to walk in God's law, which was given by Moses the servant of God, and to observe, and do all the commandments of the Lord our God, and his judgments, and his statutes, &c.*



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1799.

*MR. CARRL'S recommendation of MR. THOMAS
CASE'S Sermons.*

I conceive these three Sermons may be of
much use, for the promoting of the public
service, in taking the late Solemn Covenant
both here, and throughout the kingdoms.

December 5th, 1643.

JOSEPH CARRL

TO

*The Right Hon. JOHN LORD MAITLAND, and
to the Rev. ALEXANDER HENDERSON, Mr.
SAMUEL RUTHERFORD, Mr. ROBERT BALY,
and Mr. GEORGE GILLESPIE, Commissioners
of the General Assembly of the Church of Scot-
land, to the Assembly of Divines in England.*

Noble and Worthy Commissioners,

THIS covenant, so unanimously, so religi-
ously entered into, by the Hon. Houses
of Parliament, and Reverend Assembly,
(God's two faithful witnesses now in Eng-
land) as by yourselves also, was afterwards
sent to the city; where, amongst the rest of
the ministers, I was to take my share in pre-
paring the people. The work being so so-
lemn and great, I bethought myself, how I
might best serve this blessed design; the time
gave me some advantage, it falling in the
course of my ministry, to preach thrice be-
tween the warning and the taking. I engag-
ed my thoughts (distractions will hardly al-
low me to say, studies) wholly upon this
work; and (blessed be God) not without much
encouragement: the readiness I found in the
people to close with the invitation of God
and parliament, expressing itself, not only in
the multitudes: but in the affections of them
that offered themselves to this service, made
visible in tears of joy.

Yet when I had preached my sermons, and
administred the covenant, I found I had not

done my work. Importunity prest me to make my thoughts public; and consulting with the necessities of the multitudes of poor ignorant people, that want a teaching minister, while the kingdom waits for the covenant, rather than with mine own unfitness, I was not disobedient to the motion: I had rather appear in my weakness, than unwillingness to serve the public good. Thousands of the poor untaught people, will be glad of this help, the knowing will not despise it, if ingenuous; if otherwise, they shall trouble themselves, more than me.

And now, Right Hon. and Reverend, these poor endeavours, such as they are, make bold to present themselves unto you: streams do naturally run back into the bosom from whence they issued. God hath pleased to honour your nation, in making them the first-fruits, and pattern of a thorough covenant reformation to us, and all the rest of the Christian world. This covenant received its first life in Scotland, though it came to its first breathing in England. You sent it not with more affection, than it was entertained with gladness and joy, by our worthy parliament and learned assembly; and although with some small additions, yet such, as did rather render it, more itself, than vary it.

I shall not need to beg your patronage for myself or labours, in promoting this service; the oath of God is upon you; whereby we are contented to confess, what in your paternal letter to our Assembly, you were pleased

upon other respects to acknowledge, that your assistance, is become your debt, "To all that enter into this league and covenant, in the maintaining and pursuance thereof:" to the payment whereof, yourselves are already come through a painful and hazardous travel, to join your learned assistance, with our faithful assembly; to which, your presence adds both strength and ornament: while thousands of your nation are preparing their brotherly addresses, to pay the same debt to the whole kingdom, now almost in as great an exigence, as once the Gibeonites were, when their five kings, with all their united forces were within few days march, to take a bloody and unnatural revenge, for their entering into covenant with Joshua.

Only, we beseech you, account it not our distrust our jealousy, if sometimes you hear us complaining with the mother of Sisera, 'Why are their chariots so long in coming?' 'Why stay the wheels of their chariots?'

We know the mercy and righteousness of Joshua dwells in your bosoms, which cannot suffer you to deny or delay that assistance to your brethren, whom you have invited into the league and covenant of God upon so fair and honourable terms, which Joshua durst not deny unto the enemies of God and his people, 'because they had sworn unto them 'by the Lord God of Israel,' Josh. ix. 19. Although by a serpentine wiliness they had wound themselves into that association. Joshua's conscienciousness of that obligation,

carried 'him and his army all night to the
'rescue of the Gibeonites,' Josh. x. 9. And
truly, we doubt not, but your tenderness of
this oath of God, between England and Scot-
land, had before this time brought in your pre-
pared forces, to the succour of your endangere-
d brethren, had not our creature-confidence,
unthankfulness, and other hidden remoras,
hung at the keel and bottom of this expedition.

The Searcher of hearts, and the Father of
mercies, discover, and remove the accursed
thing, whatsoever it is, that it may no longer
obstruct their timely approach, nor render it
when it comes, unanswerable to our fainting
expectations. The Lord of hosts, bring in
your forces, and come in with them; his ter-
ror go before them, and his glory be their
reward; so shall they like a Mahanaim, the
host of God, be a dread to the enemies, a re-
viving to the languishing hopes of God's peo-
ple, and a powerful means to assist our parlia-
ment and armies, in the settling of that ble-
ssed peace and reformation; for which, both
the nations have 'lifted up their hands to
'most high God.'

Sirs, in the midst of all these calls and ex-
pectations, pardon, and own me, if I humbly
claim my share for myself, and poor endea-
vours, both which, he cordially devotes to
yours, and the kingdom's service, who is

Yours, in all gospel offices,

to honour and serve you,

THOMAS CASE

TO THE
R E A D E R.

READER,

THE fears of unworthy accommodations, which have possessed many mens spirits God hath hitherto graciously prevented by the wisdom and piety of our worthy senators in parliament, who yet, have left no stone unturned for the procuring of such a peace, as might render both king and parliament, church and state, truly happy and glorious; which is the cordial desire, wherewith every good Christian and loyal subject doth travel, that wisheth and studies the recovery and preservation of these three kingdoms: what further security this sacred covenant may add, believe and wait.

There is another accommodation which may do as much mischief; and as the more dangerous, by how much more it is secret, which concerns thee with all care and diligence to prevent; and that is an accommodation with base sinful lusts, which fight against thy soul, and the kingdom's safety. How low they have brought the kingdom, is too apparent to every eye; what they have done to thy soul, is best known to God, and thine own conscience. God calls not only upon parliament and assembly, but upon families and persons, for a thorough reformation; if thou compound, thou destroyest thyself, and three kingdoms; 'one sinner destroys much good,' Eccles. ix.

18. This covenant conscientiously made and kept, will prevent this evil: for thy encouragement and direction wherein, these three sermons are prest. The first discovering the great quarrel of covenant-violation, either in refusing, profaning, or breaking thereof. The second answering, according to my model, such objections against the taking of this covenant, as I met withal; and laying down some encouragements and engagements to the taking of it. The third, holding forth such directions as may serve for thy help, so to make, and so mind thy covenant, as thou mayst do it both to acceptation and perpetuity. If God please to add his blessing, neither I in publishing nor thou in reading, shall have cause to be ashamed of our pains: If God be dallied withal in this covenant, I tremble to think what will become of us; it is the strongest physic that ever the kingdom took; and I am almost confident, that as in the public state, it will either put a period to our distempers or to our being; so in the personal condition it will either blast thy lusts, or slay thy soul. My reason is because God is engaged: If we be found conscientious of this covenant, he is engaged to us, against our enemies without, and our lust within, and they shall not be able to stand upon us.

If after so solemn an obligation, we shall be found to mock God, we have engaged him against us; and add the Almighty to the number of our enemies, a swift and a powerful witness, and avenger of our perfidiouness.

For will refusal of this covenant help us; when God shall come to interpret, it will be found, I fear, in most, but a depart from us; and when God shall answer the daring sinner in his own language, woe to the poor wretch, that ever he was born.

I have therefore three humble requests to make.

First, To our truly honourable, and worthy honoured senators; that in the wisdom and counsel, of good king Hezekiah, 2 Chron. xxx. in a concernment of the like nature, they would be pleased, with their commands, for the taking of the covenant, to send forth also such timely laws and directions, into the kingdom, as may prepare the people, and prevent this holy ordinance, from that contempt and profanation, which will otherwise be unavoidably cast upon it.

The *second* is to my brethren in the ministry; that to the same end, they, with the good priests and Levites, in Hezekiah's time, would be active and diligent, to put in execution, those directions and ordinances, and to do, what else may be found in their several places, advantageous to the sanctifying of their people, for so holy a service; lest, if they sin through their neglect, they translate the peoples guilt upon their own heads.

Yea, I could wish, that all the faithful ministers of Christ, through the kingdom, as they are the Lord's remembrancers to the people, and the peoples remembrancers to God, would frequently in their sermons,

mind people of the vow of God, that lies upon their souls: and in their prayers make frequent mentions of it to God, with holy David's holy jealousy, and compassion over his people, in the day of their willing and liberal contributions to the house of God. 'O Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, our fathers, keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of thy people, and prepare their heart unto thee. 1 Chron. xxix. 18. That so the memory of so solemn and sacred an engagement, may not die off from the heart of the kingdom for ever.

Lastly, To every soul that shall enter into this holy league and covenant; my request is that they would look about them: life and death is before them; if we break with God now, we have just cause to fear, God will stand to covenant no more with us, but will avenge the quarrel, with our utter destruction; if we be sincere and faithful, this covenant will be a foundation of much peace, joy, glory, and security, to us, and our feet to the coming of Christ, which that it may be, shall be the earnest prayer of him, who is

thy servant for

Jesus' sake.

THOMAS CASE

S E R M O N I.

Preached at Laurence Church, on the Fast
day, September 27. 1643.

LEVITICUS xxvi. 25.

*And I will bring a sword upon you, that shall
avenge the quarrel of my covenant.*

THIS chapter contains a gradation of sins,
and a gradation of punishments; high-
er degrees of plagues, threatening to overtake
higher degrees of sin. ‘And if you will not
yet for all this hearken unto me, then will
I punish you seven times more for your sins;’
four times repeated over in this chapter.

The words read, they are at the top, or ra-
ther the sum of both; covenant violation, the
top or sum of all the evils of sin mentioned in
this chapter, and the sword with its con-
comitants, the top or sum of all the evils of pu-
nishment threatned. And so you have the di-
vision of the words before I thought of it:

scil. { The peoples sins.
 { God’s judgments.

Their sin, the abuse and violation of cove-
nant; God’s judgments, the sword, &c.

In the one, they walk contrary to God, in
the other, God walks contrary to them: from
whence observe;

Doct. Covenant violation is matter of a
high quarrel between God and a people,

which God threatens to avenge with the sword.

You see there are two branches in this doctrine.

I. Covenant abuse is matter of an high quarrel between God and a people.

II. God threatens to avenge this quarrel with the sword.

I. For the first, that covenant violation is matter of high quarrel between God and a people; quarrel you find in the text; and high you find it in the situation of the text. This standing as I shewed you at a top of the gradation of the sins here specified, or being the *summa totalis* of them all; abuse of covenant.

It is this first branch I shall chiefly pursue; the second I shall but touch upon, as time and occasion will serve.

In the managing therefore of the first branch I shall endeavour these three things.

1. I shall shew you what covenant abuse or violation is, or wherein it doth consist.

2. I shall lay you down some demonstrations to prove the [*oti*,] namely, that it is so.

3. I will lay you down the grounds, which shall give you an account of the [*di oti*,] namely, how it comes to pass, that covenant violation amounts to such a high quarrel between God and a people.

Covenant
violation,
consists, 1.
in wilful
neglect.

For the first, covenant abuse, or violation, consists in these three things.

1. In a contemptuous wilful ne-

lect and refusal of it, when God doth graciously invite a people or person to come in covenant with him; so it is reported of those wicked Ephramites, Manassites, and Rebulunites, that when Hezekiah sent a gracious message unto them, to invite them to turn again unto the Lord, from whom they were departed by a grievous backsliding, and to keep the feast of the passover, (which was the seal of the covenant) they added this aggravation to all their former rebellions, they refused the message, 'and laughed the messengers to scorn, and mocked them,' 2 Chron. xxx. 9, 10.

2. It doth consist in an undue manner of taking of it, and that in divers respects:

First, When people take it rashly, in opposition unto judgment, one of the qualifications required to an oath, Jer. iv. 2. of which more hereafter.

2dly, When they take it rottenly, in opposition to sincerity, as it is complained of the Israelites, Psalm lxxviii. 36, 37. 'They did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues. For their heart was not right with him,' &c. When men come with their idols in their hearts, and put the stumbling-block of their iniquity before their face; that is, when they come to these, or the like solemn duties with the love of any one sin upon their hearts, this is to play the hypocrite with God, and to profane his covenant.

2. In an undue manner of taking it; as 1. Rashly 2. Rottenly.

3. *Unhallowedly.*

3. When men come unhallowedly to this duty with unprepared hearts; and un sanctified affections, not labouring to get their hearts into an holy ordinance frame.

4. *Inordinately.*

4. When they come inordinately, with base, low, carnal and selfish ends, as those Shechemites did in Gen. xxxiv. 22, 23. who were persuaded to be

* *Rom.*
iv. 10.

circumcised (which was the * sign and seal of the covenant of God with his people) upon carnal hopes and expectations of increasing their substance, and enriching themselves by this means. Ver. 22.

‘ Only herein will the men consent unto us for to dwell with us, to be one people, every male among us to be circumcised, they are circumcised. (ver. 23.) Shall we give our cattle and their substance, and every beast of theirs be ours?’ This God reproveth in his own people, Ezek. xxxiii. 31. ‘ Will they say, we will be obedient to the Lord, because we have heard his voice, but their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness.’ A covenant in the mouth, but covetousness in the heart; their own base earthly covetous ends they brought with them to the holy things of God.

3. *It consists in graceless breaking of the covenant.*

3dly, Covenant violation doth consist in a graceless and careless breaking of it; either by making wicked apostacy from it, or rising up in a cursed rebellion against it, a wickedness complained of all along the scriptures, 1 Kings xix. 14. ‘ Thou

children of Israël have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine alters, &c. (Psal. lxxviii. 10.) They kept not the covenant of God; and refused to walk in his law. (ver. 37.) Neither were they stedfast in his covenant. (Jer. xi. 10.) The house of Israël, and the house of Judah have broken my covenant which I made with their fathers. (Isa. xxiv. 5.) They have transgressed the law, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant.' It were easy to multiply more instances, but these may serve; and thus much for the first query: *scil.* wherein covenant violation doth consist.

II. The second thing that I undertake, is to give you some demonstrations, to shew, that covenant violation is matter of a high quarrel between God and a people; which will appear if we consider,

Demonstrations to prove the doctrine.

First, That the discerning servant of God in scripture, such as have been acquainted with God, and have seen into the nature of

1. *The saints bewailing this sin.*

sin, have bewailed this sin with their most brinish tears, and deepest groans, and agonies of spirit. It is enough to break ones heart, to read with what heart-breaking sighs, those holy men of God, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Daniel, have bewailed this sin, lying in the dust at God's feet. Ezra ix. 6. 'O my God, I am ashamed, and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God,' &c. So cries Ezra. And again ver. 13. 'After all that is come upon

' us for our evil deeds, for our great tref-
 ' pases; seeing that thou our God hath punish-
 ' ed us less than our iniquities deserve, and
 ' hast given us such deliverance as this; should
 ' we again break thy commandments? (ver.
 ' 15.) O Lord God of Israel, thou art right-
 ' teous; for we remain yet escaped, as it is
 ' this day: Behold, we are before thee in our
 ' trespasses; for we cannot stand before thee,
 ' because of this.' Nehemiah is very pathet-
 ' tical in the confession of this sin, all along
 the ninth chapter of that book, weeping out
 this godly sorrow as it were, with tears of
 blood. Daniel is covered with confusion of
 face, when he bewailed this sin of covenant
 violation, in the ninth chapter of his prophe-
 cy. ' O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto
 ' thee, but unto us confusion of faces,' ver. 7.
 And again, ' O Lord, to us belongs confu-
 ' sion of face, to our kings, to our princes,
 &c. ver. 8. It is breach of covenant he be-
 wails, with so much confusion of face and
 brokenness of heart, in that chapter.

2. Censu-
 red in and
 by the very
 heathen.

2dly, Covenant violation is a sin
 highly censured in the very poor
 purblind heathen: It stands as an
 infamy, and a brand upon them in
 that catalogue of their sins, Rom. i. 31. co-
 venant breakers: yea, it was a sin, that as
 blind as they were, they were able by the
 very light of nature, to discover in the people
 of God, and could give it as the account of
 that ruin and desolation which befel them
 demanding of one another as they passed by

the ruins of Jerusalem, Jer. xxii. 8. 'Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this great city? then they shall answer, (ver. 9.) Because they have forsaken the covenant of the Lord their God.'

3dly, It may appear to be a quarrel of a high nature, if we consider the grievous judgments wherewith the Lord hath threatened and avenged this sin, as here in the text; the sword, with a black regiment of other dreadful judgments following; ver. 25. 'I will send a pestilence among you, and ye shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy. (ver. 26.) I will break the staff of your bread, &c. And ye shall eat, and not be satisfied.' And upon the persisting in this sin; behold, seven times more evils pursuing of them. (ver. 29.) 'You shall eat the flesh of your sons, and the flesh of your daughters shall ye eat. (ver. 30.) I will cast your carcases upon the carcases of your idols, and my soul shall abhor you. (ver. 31.) I will make your cities waste, and bring your sanctuaries unto desolation. &c. (ver. 32.) I will bring the land into desolation. Ver. 33. I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you,' &c. Isa. xxx. 18. My brethren, God is a God of judgment, and doth all his works with weight and measure. Nehemiah acknowledged it in his confession, Neh. ix. 33. Howbeit, thou art just in all that is come upon us; for thou hast done right, but we

3. *The fearful judgment wherewith it is threatened.*

'have done wickedly.' Yea, holy Ezra hath a strain higher than this, in his confession, Ezra ix. 13. 'Our God hath punished us less than our iniquities do deserve.' Behold, these great and fearful judgments and curses, pursuing this sin of covenant violation, and yet so far from exceeding, that they fall short of the merit of it: 'Our God hath punished us less than our sins deserved.' Of what a high nature think ye, is this quarrel, when so many tall judgments, like so many Anakims, though standing upon the shoulder one of another, cannot reach it?

*4 The care
of God's
people af-
ter their
recovery,
to make
up this
breach.*

Fourthly, It may appear from hence, in as much, as always upon the recovery and deliverance of the people of God, from their captivity, and other judgments; ye shall find their governors and prophets, solicitous and active in the first place, to atone God, by taking up this quarrel and controversy, between him and his people; as in all the former instances of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Daniel. They knew, that as long as this breach lay open there was no safety; floods of wrath and vengeance might break in upon them at unawares; and therefore they labour in the first place, to repair this breach, giving us thereby to understand, that violation of covenant,

*† God ac-
counts it
his honour
to keep his
covenant.*

a quarrel of such an high nature as there is no safe sleeping under it, no not for a night.

† Fifthly, Among all the excellencies and perfections that are in God

God seems to take high delight and contentment in this; and therefore doth often delight and admire himself for it, Deut. vii. 9. 'The Lord thy God, he is God, the faithful God, who keepeth covenant and mercy.' Psal. xxxix. 28. 'My covenant will stand fast.' Jer. 34. 'My covenant will I not break,' &c. And as he glories in it himself; so he calleth upon his people to glorify him in this excellency, Jer. ix. 24. 'Let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord, who exerciseth loving kindness, judgment and righteousness in the earth.' The righteousness of God is especially seen in keeping covenant with his people, and in this he calls them to glory. And so they do. It is one of the high and glorious titles that Daniel ascribes to God in his prayers, Dan. ix. 4. 'O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping covenant, and mercy,' &c. Psal. cv. 8. He hath remembered his covenant for ever; Psal. cxi. 5. He will ever be mindful of his covenant.' It is the name for which he is so dreadful in his praises, ver. 9. 'He hath commanded his covenant for ever; holy and reverend is his name.' Now surely, that excellency which God doth so admire and magnify in himself, the contrary thereof his soul doth most of all hate or abhor, in people or person; we see it in our own experience, that vice we most of all hate in our children or servants, the contrary virtue thereof doth most of all please and delight us in ourselves.

God accounts this an high favour to bring his people into covenant with him: For, 1. It is a promise.

6thly, and lastly, God speaks of bringing his people into covenant with him, as one of the highest prerogatives and choicest privileges he can honour them withal. To that purpose you may observe:

1. That it stands in the midst of a catalogue of promises. Ezek. xxxvii. 37. 'I will bring you into the bond of the covenant:' and you know

with what titles of honour the apostle hath enabled the promises? 'Exceeding great and precious promises.'

2. It is established by an oath.

2. That it falls under the sanction not of a promise only, but of an oath also, Isa. xlv. 23. 'I have sworn by myself the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return: that unto me every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall swear.' An oath, it is the seal of the covenant; and this honour God hath challenged to himself, by an irrevocable oath. 'I have sworn, &c. that to me every tongue shall swear.' Now, as it was the honour of the priesthood of Christ, above the priests under the law; that whereas they were made priests by the word only of command; Christ was made a priest by the word of oath, by him that said unto him, Heb. vii. 21. 'The Lord sware, and will not repent, thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec.' So it is the highest honour and dignity of this duty and prerogative of the people of God; that whereas

others are conferred upon them, only by the word of promise: this is established by the word of oath, by him that said, 'I have sworn by myself, that to me every tongue shall swear.' And by this you may take the measure of this sin, since by how much the more high and glorious the service and privilege is; so much the more vile and hateful an aggravation must the profanation of it needs be. And this last demonstration may serve in general, as a bottom and foundation of the next account I am to make: *scil.* The [dioti] of the truth in hand; which is

The third thing I undertook; *Grounds and reasons of the doctrine.* namely, the grounds and reasons of the doctrine, how it comes to

pass, that covenant violation is a matter of so high a quarrel between God and his people.

The first whereof is taken from 1. *The nature of a covenant.* the nature of such a covenant, *A divine ordinance.* is here spoken of.

First, That it is an ordinance of God, a part of divine worship, having the stamp and impression of divine authority upon it; 'Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, him shalt thou serve, and to him shalt thou cleave, and swear by his name,' Deut. vi. 13. chap. x. 20. From which scriptures it appears, not only to be an ordinance of God's appointing, but one of the most special and solemn: in as much as both here, and in other scriptures, it stands for the whole duty of man towards God in the first table; the ordinance whereby we specially are said

to cleave to God. 'Thou shalt cleave to him
'and swear by his name:' We cleave to
him, by swearing to him. Isa. lvi. 6. 'The
'sons of the stranger that join themselves to
'the Lord, How? It follows, and take hold
'of my covenant.'

The joining or- The covenant is the joining
dinance. ordinance, it strikes the main
stroke between God and a people. In hearing
the word, we learn our duty. In prayer, we
call in for help, for divine assistance: but
the covenant, that comes and binds the bargain.
'Come, let us join ourselves to the
'Lord, by a perpetual covenant,' Jer. l. 5.

The external Yea, if we consider the very
ceremonies ve- external ceremonies used about
ry solemn. this duty, it will appear a very
solemn ordinance; whether between man and
man, or between God and man. When Abra-
ham's servant swore to his master, to take
wife unto his son Isaac, he must put his hand
under his master's thigh, Gen. xxiv. 2. A
type that the Messias must come out of Abra-
ham's loins: so did Joseph, when he swore
to Jacob, &c. Gen. xlvii. 29. When God
made a covenant with Abraham, God com-
mands him to take a heifer of three years old,
a she-goat, and a ram, and divide them in the
midst, ver. 9, 10. When he hath done, God
himself passeth betwixt the pieces, for a ratifi-
cation of the covenant, ver. 17. Abraham
when he takes an oath, lifts up his hand unto
the Lord, the most high God. These and the
like postures used about this service, carry a

great deal of reverence and solemnity in the very face of them; and this solemnity even of the outward ceremony, God useth as an aggravation of covenant violation. God layeth it close unto the charge of Zedekiah, that he brake his covenant with the king of Babylon, Ezek. xvii. 18. 'When lo, he had given his hand.' And to the princes and people of Judah, that they transgressed the covenant, Jer. xxxiv. 18. 'When they had cut the calf in twain, and passed between the parts thereof. And ver. 19, 20. For this he threatens to give them unto the hands of their enemies. And if the external solemnity add so much aggravation to this sin, then how much more doth that inward beauty and glory of it, heap up guilt upon their heads, that are found to be profaners and violaters of so solemn an ordinance?

A second aggravation of this sin, ariseth from the matter of the covenant. Covenants betwixt man and man, are in things appertaining to man; the covenant betwixt God and man, is in things appertaining unto God; which, as it doth exceedingly heighten the duty, so it doth highly aggravate the violation. It was the honour of the priests under the law, above other men, that they were ordained for men in things pertaining unto God, Heb. v. 1. And it was the honour of Christ, above all other priests, that his priesthood was employed about matters of an higher nature, than the priesthood of the sons of Aaron, Heb. viii. 6. 'He hath obtained a

' more excellent ministry, by how much
 ' he is the Mediator of a better covenant
 ' which was established upon better promises.
 Now consider then, I beseech you, how ex-
 cellent that covenant must be above all others
 the matter whereof gave excellency to the
 very priesthood of Christ himself, and lift
 it up above all other priesthoods: for as the
 apostle reasons concerning Abraham and
 Melchisedec, that Melchisedec was greater
 than Abraham, because he blessed him, Heb.
 vii. 7. ' For without question, the lesser
 ' blessed of the better.' So may I in for-
 sense argue the excellency of this covenant
 above the priesthood of Christ, in as much
 as this covenant gives excellency to this priest-
 hood. ' He hath obtained a more excellent
 ' priesthood, by how much he is Mediator of
 ' a better covenant.' And certainly the
 excellency of the matter, is a transcendent
 aggravation of the violation of the covenant
 for men to trifle and prevaricate in things of
 such high concernment, in things so imme-
 diately appertaining to God, must needs be
 a business of a higher provocation, than the
 sons of men do ordinarily dream of. The
 apostle reasons strongly and dreadfully in this
 very case, Heb. x. 28, 29. ' He that despised
 ' Moses law, died without mercy; of how
 ' much sorer punishment shall he be thought
 ' worthy, who hath counted the blood of the
 ' covenant, an unholy thing?' &c. The
 covenant and the blood of it, the privilege
 and the purchase, are both trampled under

feet in some degree or other, by covenant profanation.

3dly, A third reason why covenant profanation is matter of so high a quarrel, is taken from the form of it, which is, an oath, an oath on both sides. The creature swears by God, and God swears by himself: this is the form or seal of covenants, between men and men. So Jacob when he made a covenant with his uncle Laban, sware 'by the fear of his father Isaac,' Gen. xxxi. 53. *i. e.* (that is objective) by the God whom his father Isaac feared. So Jonathan and David sware mutually by the name of God. The oath of the Lord was betwixt them. So Zedekiah took an oath of fealty and subjection unto Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, in the name of the God of Israel; for which cause, God calls it, 'my oath, and my covenant,' Ezek. xvii. 13, and 19. And hence it is, that God so severely threatens the violation of that covenant, with enevitable destruction upon Zedekiah, Ezek. xvii. 16. 'As I live, saith the Lord God, sure in the place where the king dwelleth, that made him king, whose oath he despised, and whose covenant he brake, even with him, in the midst of Babylon shall he die.' The king of Babylon's oath, because Zedekiah sware to him; and God's oath, because he sware by him: and see how divine justice avengeth the quarrel of this covenant. Zedekiah sware to Nebuchadnezzar, and did not keep his oath; but for this, God swears the death of Zedekiah, and will

be sure to keep his oath. This accession of an oath to the covenant, a people or person swearing by the most high God, and calling so holy and dreadful a majesty to witness, must needs wonderfully heighten the sin, and aggravate the quarrel. By this means, covenant breach, becometh a double sin; a sin twisted of two sins (and those, no small ones, neither) of lying and swearing, Jer. xxiii. 10. The lie being the profanation of the truth of God, and the oath the profanation of the God of truth; sins for which (take them singly) a 'land doth often mourn,' Hos. iv. 2. Of how much higher provocation are they when they meet, yea, when they meet, and are met into one, communicating their malignity one unto another, and thereby bigning, and aggravating one another: the lie making the oath greater, and the oath making the lie greater; and out of both there ariseth an *aliquod tertium*, a third sin of monstrous nature; namely, perjury, which is a blasphemy against the truth of God, and against the God of truth, while his sacred name is sworn by, and himself called in, to witness to a lie: and so that sin, or sins, which in reference to the law of God, is disobedience; in reference to the love of God, invading, pardoning, healing, is rebellion; in reference to our promise, is treachery; is now at last in reference to the oath aggravated into perjury and blasphemy. This is much but this is not all.

Consider the parties entering 4. *Reason.*
 this oath, and you will find a *The parties*
 fourth, and yet a strong ground *swearing.*
 and reason, why covenant violation is so
 high a quarrel; the parties striking this cove-
 nant which are God and his people, and
 this doth exceedingly aggravate the sin: since
 by how much the parties interested in the
 covenant, are more high and honourable, by
 so much the more solemn and venerable is a
 covenant esteemed. So covenants entered into,
 between kings and kings, and between king-
 doms and kingdoms, are accounted more
 solemn and sacred, than those that are past
 between private persons: What is it then
 think ye, when a kingdom, yea, kingdoms,
 on one side, and the great almighty God on
 the other side, swear mutually one to another?
 and the more sacred the covenant, the more
 profane the violation. Oh! for a people to
 swear, not only by God, but to God, and yet
 dally or prevaricate, this must needs be a
 mockery of an high provocation. If God so
 threaten the breach of oaths, wherein he was
 but witness, how impatient will he be of those
 forfeitures, wherein he is both witness and
 party? a people or person, swearing by God,
 to God?

And yet once more consider 5. *Reason.*
 the end of a covenant, between 1. *End of a co-*
 God and a people, and you *venant.*
 will see more matter of provocation in the
 profanation of it. Now the end is twofold,

{ *Primary* or essential.
 { *Secondary* or consequential.

The *primary* or essential end, is to knit a sure indissoluble knot, between God and his people, Jer. l. 5. 'Come let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant, &c. Let us join. A covenant is the joining ordinance, the marriage-knot, as it were wherein God and a people are made one; for as in marriage, 'two, saith he, shall be one flesh;' so in a covenant, 'he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit' 1 Cor. vi. 16, 17. Those be high and glorious expressions, which our Saviour useth in that heavenly prayer, John xvii. 21, 22, 23. 'That they may be all one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee; that they also may be one in us: that the world may know that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one. I in thee, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.' All one, and one in us, and one as we are one, and made perfect in one. These be expressions and privileges of unspeakable worth and excellency; and these are the fruits of a covenant, rightly struck between God and a people, when both sides do it with all their heart, and with all their soul; as God himself renders it, more than once or twice in scripture. 'I will be their God, and they shall be my people,' Jer. xxiv. 7. chap. xxxi. 33. Chap. xxx. 22. Chap. xxxii. 38. *i. e.* I will be to them, what they can expect

from a God, and they shall be to me, what I expect from a people: all I am, and have, shall be for their good; and all they are, or have, shall be for my glory; and so the spouse triumphs, Cant. ii. 16. chap. vi. 3. 'I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine.' This is the first and main end of a covenant.

And the second is like unto it; 2. *End.* which is, to 'put an end to all strife.' Heb. vi. 16. An oath for confirmation, is an end of all strife. *i. e.* If here be any doubts, or hesitations, or diffidence on either side; an oath by the swearing party, is, or should be, the removal of that doubt, or distrust whatsoever. It should, I say, be so managed and entertained, as that it should put the matter out of question, to make all sure: whether it be in matters of fact, *de præterito*, for the time past, or engagements, *de futuro*, for the time to come; so it is between God and man. Man swears to God, to secure God as it were, that there shall be no more tergiversations, or treacherous dealings, as in times past. Let us join in a perpetual covenant, that shall never be forgotten. *q. d.* Other covenants have been forgotten, this shall never; we will backslide no more, break covenant no more: or rather a people or person swear to God to secure themselves against themselves, to prevent and shut the door, against all future solicitations, importunities and temptations whatsoever: that when any of their old lovers should come and bespeak their affections, they may be able to put them all by, that

there might no possibility of yielding or hearkening to the voice of this charmer, charm he never so wisely; while the soul may answer them all, as sometime Jephthah did his daughter, tho' with more warrant, and less trouble of mind, Judges xi. 35. 'I have opened my mouth to the Lord, and I cannot go back. And with David, Psal. cxix. 106. 'I have sworn, and I will perform it,' I will be as good as my word, tho' I die for it, 'that I will keep thy righteous judgments.' And again, 'thy vows are upon me, O God, I will render praise unto thee.' I am not mine own to dispose of; I have given my heart and my loves, and myself unto another; and I do not repent of what I have done, if I were to do again, I would do it, and were worth a thousand times more, than I am, he to whom I have sworn, should have it all. And so on the other side, God swears to his people, that (as I may so say) he may leave himself no possibility of recanting, or recalling his word, if he had a mind to it. The apostle's expression hints such a kind of supposition 'God, when he could swear by no greater than himself, swore by himself: why? that by two immutable things; *scil.* his word, and his oath, in which it was impossible for God to lie,' Hebrews vi. 13. ver. 16. Impossible for him to lie; a very strange expression; as if God would lock up himself under an oath from all possibility of lying or recalling the word out of his mouth, he would not trust himself, as the apostle should say, with making a bare

promise, but claps an oath upon it also, that if he would, yet he could not go back: this seems to be implied in this expression. But the truth is, tho' we need such bolts and locks to keep us from starting, God doth not; he hath as much and more mind to keep his word, than we have that he should: but for our sakes, for our sakes altogether, is this written, because of the unbelief of our hearts, to secure our unbelieving objecting spirits, against all fear and jealousy, of so much, as possibility of going back from his word, or failing of his promise, and so indeed it is after expressed. Ver. 18. That by two immutable things, by which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation,' &c. To strengthen our weak hands, and feeble knees, and drooping spirits in the expectations and belief of the undoubted accomplishment of all his promises.

Now then, beloved Christians, this being the end of covenants and oaths mutually between God and his people; *scil.* to unite, and secure the one to the other; when a people or person, baffle, or break with God after all this, the end of the covenant is frustrated and defrauded; the bands are broken, the security dissolved; all falls in sunder, as a bundle of arrows, when the bond is cut, and when in comes fears, doubts, and jealousies; which oft do no small mischief in the soul, while they even take a poor people, or person captive, and spoil them of their precious treasure, that they can hardly recover their

former comforts, or confidence again, in a long time. These breaches do so wound their spirits, and shrink up their sinews, I speak of the people of God themselves, that with their father Jacob, they go halting (peradventure) to their very graves.

And now look upon the covenant under all these aspects and notions of nature, matter, form, parties, end; and then you will easily be able to give an account; why covenant violation should be a matter of so high a quarrel, between God and a people, in all the three kinds of it; contemptuous refusing, graceless profaning, perfidious deceiving, not only of the covenant of God, but of the God of the covenant; a people or person mocking God, and deluding themselves, breaking with God; and doing what they can to make God break with them, and to break them all to pieces.

The second branch of the doctrine.

Now for the second branch of the doctrine. This quarrel God threatens to avenge with the sword.

There are but two things which I need handle here.

I. *De facto*, To shew, how God hath made good this threatening, in the dispensations of his providence and justice, by overtaking this sin of covenant profanation, with this judgment of the sword, and its concomitants.

II. *De jure*, To vindicate and assert God's justice in these dispensations of his, by shewing the equity and righteousness of such

proceedings. But both these are done, if not so fully as might be, yet sufficiently already: the instances given of the sin, in the very same places for the most part holding forth also examples of the judgment; besides so many other instances in scripture, so known, that however is not a stranger to his bible, may turn to them with a wet finger. And the demonstrations and reasons, that set forth unto you the greatness of the sin, the heights of the quarrel, do upon the very first view, vindicate and justify the equity of God's proceedings in avenging this sin and quarrel with so grievous a judgment, as the sword; and since the servants of God, who have well weighed both in the balance of the sanctuary, have acknowledged not only the sin to have equalled the judgment; [*'Thou art just, O Lord, in all that is come upon us,'* Neh. x.] But infinitely to have weighed it down; our God hath punished us less than our iniquities deserve,' Ezra ix.

This therefore shall suffice for the second branch of this doctrine; and so we will improve the time that might be spent in the further proof, and enlargement thereof, in making use of what hath been delivered already in that doctrine.

Use. The first use that we may make of this sad truth, may be according to the work of this day, to discover to us *'what cause we have to afflict our souls, and to abhor ourselves in dust and ashes, before the Lord.'* For behold, God is contending with this

Numb. III.

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kingdom by fire; the fire of the sword (so called often in the scripture) is sent upon us, and marcheth through the breadth of the land, in the widest extent of the kingdom, even from the furthestmost parts of the west to the uttermost parts of the north: a sword, I say, the worst of all judgments (witness the sad catalogue of evils here that do accompany it, *ut supra*;) yea, a civil sword, the worst of all swords; a foreign sword hits at random, but this knows whom to smite, and where to make the deepest wounds; brother embrews his hands in the brother's blood, and a man's enemies are these of his own house, and therefore the more enemies, because of his own house. No quarrel so fierce, no feud so mortal, as those are between the nearest relations, when coals of division are once kindled amongst them. This sword, I say, is drawn; and much flesh it hath devoured already, and drunk much precious blood. National blood, Christian blood, fraternal blood; while we cry to it, as once Jeremiah did, Jer. xlvii. 6. 'O thou sword of the Lord, how long will it be e'er thou be quiet? put up thyself into thy scabbard, rest and be still.' But the sword either gives us no answer, or such a one as follows there in the next verse. 'How can I be quiet, seeing the Lord hath given me a charge against England?' yea, we may fear, that God is saying concerning us, as once to his prophet Ezekiel, concerning Israel, Ezek. xxi. 9, 10. 'A sword, a sword is sharpened, it is sharpened and also

furbished. It is sharpened to make a sore slaughter, should we then make mirth?' no, when God sends a sword upon a people, the times are times of mourning, and not of merriment. Read on else. Ver. 10. 'It contemneth the rod of my son, as every tree.' Ver. 11. 'And he hath given it to be furbished, that it may be handled: this sword is sharpened, and it is furbished, to give it into the hand of the slayer,' Ver. 12. 'Cry and howl, son of man, for it shall be upon my people, it shall be upon all the princes of Israel: terrors, by reason of the sword, shall be upon my people: smite therefore upon thy thigh.' Ver. 13. Because it is a trial, and what if the sword contemn the rod?' the rod of God has been upon us; the rod of a more inferior and gentler correction; but it has done us no good, and is so bound up in our hearts, that it is not a rod of correction that will fetch it out. We will not yet stoop, nor submit unto the government of Jesus Christ; therefore we may say, that now the sword comes to contemn the rod, to despise the rod; saying, as it were, what does this silly rod do here? will they not stoop? will they not put their necks under the yoke of Christ? let me come, I'll make them either bow or break; I'll make them either yield, I'll have their blood. Those his enemies that will not have him reign over them, bring them hither, that I may slay them before his face. O my brethren, we may fear, that God is speaking against us in some such bitter language as this is; and what think you may be

the cause? what the quarrel? surely there is cause enough, the parliament tell us of a fearful catalogue of horrible provocations.

“Contempt of God’s holy ordinance and of holiness itself; gross and affected ignorance, under the glorious light of the gospel clearly shining among us; unfruitfulness under the precious means of grace; ingratitude for mercies; incorrigibleness under judgments; multitudes of oaths and blasphemies; wicked profanations of the Lord’s day, brawls, sports and gamings, formerly encouraged even by authority. All sorts of uncleanness, luxury, and excess in eating or drinking; vanity, pride, and prodigality in apparel; envy, contention, and unnatural divisions, oppression, fraud, and violence; from divers other which sins, and many other, not one person throughout the whole nation, can say, that he is wholly free; besides that, all must confess, that they have contributed toward the great stock of national sins, and so have increased the treasure of wrath, against the days of wrath.” But especially, they tell of two horrid crying sins, idolatry, and bloodshed. “Idolatry, which as it was the sin of our ancestors; so it is the spreading sin of these latter times, while by a general connivance, and almost toleration, it hath been several ways fomented and encouraged. And for the other crying and cruel sin of blood-shed, that calls aloud for vengeance, it went hand in hand, with the abominable idol of the many in the days of queen Mary, and some of her

redecessors; when many hundreds of the dear martyrs, and saints of God, lost their precious lives in flames and prisons."

These are the sins and provocations which our parliament worthies give us notice of; which surely may amount to a very high quarrel. But to all these without controversy, England hath added this quarrel in the next to make up the measure of our iniquities; even covenant-violation. Witness all these several ways and branches of this sin, mentioned in the entrance.

Which of them doth not this day betide and stand guilty of this day before the Lord? for,

1. Are there not found among us multitudes of such profane E-

All sorts of covenant-violation found among us. Wiful rejection.

phraimish and Zebulonitish spirits, that do reproachfully and contemptuously refuse and reject the covenant of God; that deal with the parliament injunctions, and the ministers of the gospel's invitations to this service, as they did with king Hezekiah's messengers, laugh them to scorn; lade them with calumnies and reproaches? what more covenants break? will they never have done covenanting? will they send us to hell quick, with their protestations, and oaths, and covenants?

These, and the like voices of murmur and rebellion, God hath heard in our tents, and his anger is kindled. Oh! what shiftings and shufflings, what base unworthy tergiversations hath God found among us, to elude and evade this solemn service? indeed he said,

he would bring his people into the bond of the covenant; but if he would have the most part of the people among us, enter into covenant with him, he must drive them into the bond of the covenant. Are not these of the kindred of the scribes and lawyers, of whom it is said, when they were invited unto baptism, which (was the seal of the covenant) 'they rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized?' &c. Luke vii. 30. and may not the ministers of the gospel answer this generation in some such language, as the apostle's did the unbelieving Jews, who 'spake against the things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming,' even as these men do? Acts xiii. 45. ver. 46. 'It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken unto you: but since you put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life; lo, we turn to the Gentiles.' So we turn to these men: It was our commission and compassion to speak to you, and persuade you to enter into this solemn league and covenant with God and his people; but since you put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of so great a privilege; lo, we turn to other people, and other churches, we will trouble you no more; God will have a people that shall accept of this grace of his, and think themselves highly honoured too, by the most high God.

2. Of them that do take it, how few be there that take it in a due manner, according

to the laws and rules of so holy and solemn an ordinance? for,

1. How many be there that take *Rash and* rashly; hand over head, as we say, *unadvised* not considering what they do? the *entering in-* sin of former times in England hath *to covenant.* been, that our fathers knew not this service, they regarded it not, it was hid from them, they inquired not after it; and these times of ignorance God winked at, or lightly regarded them, Eccles. v. 1. But it is the sin of these latter times, that we slight this ordinance; that we know not, or regard not, to know the laws of this ordinance; the goings in thereof, and the comings out thereof, that we come to such an extraordinary duty with ordinary (hardly so much as ordinary) consideration and preparation. Indeed such care and caution hath not been used for the informing and preparing of people, for so solemn a service, as was meet; whereby it hath been exposed to unspeakable profanation, and the most of people have but offered the sacrifice of fools, while they have made their address thereunto. The Lord convince and humble those, whom it doth more especially concern to have prevent this sin, by their providence and diligence; for concerning this service, we have just cause to acknowledge with holy David, 1 Chron. xv. 13. For because ye did it not at the first, the Lord our God made a breach upon us, (yea, many breaches in the west, and in the north, &c.) 'for that we sought him not (herein)

'after the due order.' We kept our fasts, for the most part, as if nothing were required, but to hang down our head for a day; and we take covenants, as if all that is to be done, were but to hold up the hand for a day.

Unsoundness of heart.

2. Again, how many have taken it rottenly and hypocritically, their hearts not being upright with God in this matter, Psal. lxxviii. 37. while some have comewith their idols in their hearts, with their base lusts in their bosoms. Some have taken it, if not with a purpose to break it, yet with no purpose to keep it; 'they did but flatter 'him with their mouth, and lie to him with 'their tongues.' ver 35. And others have taken it with their own evasions and limitations, and reservations; such a Jesuitical spirit is got in among us; by which means it comes to pass, that by that time men have pared off, and left one, and put what interpretations they frame to themselves; there is little left worth the name of a covenant.

3. In the third place, how many profane this ordinance, by setting up base and earthly and carnal ends, and aims to themselves? how many come to this ordinance with Shechemitish spirits? shall not their cattle, and their substance, and every beast of theirs, be ours? If I take it not, saith the malignant citizen, I shall have my wares plundered. If I take it not, saith the malignant gentleman, I shall have my estate seized. If I take it not, saith the malignant parson, I shall have my living sequestered, and my person, it may be,

cast into *limbo patrum*, &c. To such base and dunghill respects, do men of vile spirits, prostitute this pure and heavenly ordinance.

4. But lastly, have we not all *Unfaithfulness* conspired together, as it were, *in keeping covenant* from the highest to the lowest, from the greatest to the least, to break the covenant of our God? how may God and his ministers renew all those complaints over England, that were formerly poured out over Israel? Psal. lxxviii. 10. 'They have forsaken thy covenant.' Ver. 37. 'They kept not the covenant of their God; they were not stedfast in his covenant.' Ver. 57. 'They turned back, and dealt unfaithfully; they were turned aside like a deceitful bow.' Alas! what have we done with all the covenants, we have made with God? our baptismal vows, renewed (perhaps) monthly at the Lord's table; our sick-beds engagements; parliament protestations, and covenants, with those often monthly, weekly, almost daily repetitions of covenants in the days of humiliations and thanksgivings; what is become of them all? have we not dealt with them in some such like manner, as Moses dealt with the two tables; who went up into the mountain, to receive them from God; but as soon as he came down to the bottom, threw them out of his hands, and brake them? so have we done before all the world; we have 'gone up into the mountain of the house of the Lord' (so is the place of public worship called, Isa. ii. 3.) to make and renew our solemn

vows and covenants, which we have sealed under an oath and a curse before, and with the most high God; but no sooner (almost) have we come down into the valley of our ordinary walking and conversation; but we have thrown out of our hands, and broken them all to pieces. Vow reformation to day, and within a few days be drunk again; and swear again, and be unclean again, and worldly, and wanton, and secure again; as loose, vain unfavoury, and unsensible of public sin and misery as ever. Swear our estates to-day, and perhaps deny a twentieth part of them to-morrow, worth thousands and deny to lend an hundred, a score, &c. Swear to live and die with the parliament, and the cause to-day, and speak against both to-morrow. Swear to assist them to-day, against all opposers and malignants; and it may be within a few days after, assist opposers and malignants against them. Help them off with their taxations, tho' never so indifferent and easy. Convey, conceal their goods and treasure, tho' never so justly forfeited to the state. Get their monies, arms, horses, provisions restored, tho' never so lawfully seized by sufficient warrant, and the industry and piety of faithful officers, who venture their estates, their lives, their all, in the service. Swear and unswear, do and undo, protest for Christ to-day, and accommodate for Antichrist to-morrow; and when told of it, either they forgot; or which I tremble to think of, and blush to mention, some (and these no small ones) put in mind

upon such occasions of their protestations, and their covenant, have not feared to reply, alas! that was broken long since. As if breach of our covenant did dissolve our engagements; and because we have broke once with God, we were never bound afterward to keep our word, our oaths: surely, that were an easy way of getting loose. But this God hath seen and heard among us; and me-thinks, I hear that angry question sounding in mine ears, Ezek. xvii. 15. 'Shall he prosper? shall he escape that doth such things? or shall he break the covenant and be delivered?'

And if the quarrel were so high, and God so angry for the breach of the covenant that was but between man and man; yea, between people in external covenant with himself, and a profest enemy, a tyrant, an usurper; what may such a people, for whom God hath done, and is doing such great things, expect upon covenants, so religiously and solemnly made, and sworn, not only before, but with so holy a God: and so often, and so treacherously, yea so desperately abused and trampled under feet? I may say unto you therefore, as sometime good Josiah did to his servants, Chron. xxxiv. 21. 'Go inquire *Humiliation* of the Lord for us, and for the *for this sin*. remnant that are left in Israel, and in Judah; for great is the wrath of the Lord that is poured out upon us, because we have not kept the word,' and oath, which we have uttered to the Lord our God. It is without question, the quarrel of the covenant,

which the sword is this day avenging upon England, with so much wrath, and fury poured out: wo unto us, our God is grievously angry, what shall we do? when David saw the angel of the Lord standing between the heaven and earth, having a sword drawn in his hand, stretched out over Jerusalem, Chron. xxi. 16, It is said, ver. 16. 'Then David and the elders of Israel, who were clothed with sackcloth, fell upon their faces.' Ver. 17. 'And David said, even I it is that have sinned, and done evil indeed; but as for these sheep, what have they done? let thine hand I pray thee, O Lord my God, be upon me, and upon my father's house, &c. And by the direction of the angel, he built an altar, and offered sacrifices upon it unto the Lord, and the anger of the Lord was pacified towards his people,' ver. 18. and 26.

Let us do so this day, and in all our public and private humiliations. The angel hath his sword drawn, stretched out over the whole land, even the sword threatened in the text to avenge the quarrel of the covenant. Let us fall down upon our faces, and lie in the dust; draw water, and pour it out before the Lord; take up Jeremiah's wail and lamentation, Jer. ix. 1. 'Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!' yea, that we might weep bitterly for the sin which hath slain so many precious sons of Zion; even this sin, covenant-violation. And, oh! you that

have stood out in refusing the covenant of God, do not stand out in refusing to be humbled for your refusals. You that have been wash and rotten, slight and carnal, and hypocritical in taking the covenant, be not so in your confessions of, and humiliations for this great sin of yours, whereby God is provoked; labour to be deep and downright; serious, solid, and substantial in your mournings and lamentations over your sins, yourselves, and the kingdom. You that have broken the covenant of your God, over and over again, labour to get your hearts broken for this sin; and to that end 'look upon him whom ye have pierced,' Zech. xii. 10. whose skin, and whose flesh, and whose heart, and whose soul, you have broken by covenant-breaches, not while he hung upon the cross only, but as the apostle, Heb. vi. 6. 'Have crucified him afresh to yourselves, and put him to an open shame.' Oh! look upon him, his tears, his wounds, his blood, &c. till your eyes run down with tears, your hearts be wounded; and your souls even melt into blood within you. And from thence even turn your eyes also to look upon them, whom ye have pierced; your slain, wounded brethren: behold, those many thousands that lie slain in the high places of the field; behold, those many hundreds that lie sick and bleeding, almost to the death, of the wounds which your sins, especially your treacherous dealing in the covenant of God, have made upon their bodies. Oh! cry with David, 'I have sinned; these

Numb. III.

Z

‘poor sheep what have they done? let thine
 ‘hand I pray thee, O Lord my God, be upon
 ‘me, and upon my father’s house.’ Oh
 would it not melt any heart, that were not
 harder than the rock in the wilderness, to see
 so many poor creatures bleeding, languishing,
 dying, slain, under the guilt of our covenant
 profanation? I may say unto you, as once
 Pharaoh’s servants said unto him, ‘knowest
 ‘thou not yet, that Egypt is destroyed?’ Know
 you not yet, that England is almost destroyed?
 Oh! it would break your hearts, to hear
 the reports of the western, and many of the
 northern parts of the land. How sad, how
 black, how desolate! what a face of ruin, and
 destruction, there is to be seen upon them;
 the beasts of the field cut off; the way-faring
 man ceaseth; the inhabitants driven from
 their habitations, and the little remnant striped
 naked and bare, seeking for bread to relieve
 your souls, with the peril of their lives, Lam.
 v. 9. under unspeakable miseries and afflictions:
 doubtless to see what thousands feel, it
 would make us weary of our lives, while (in
 a word) those countries and places which
 before the destroyer were, as a garden of Eden;
 behind him are as a desolate wilderness.

Brethren, we have almost broken the nation
 in pieces; there is yet a little life left.
 Oh! lift up your voices for the remnant that
 remains. Labour to break your hearts into a
 thousand pieces. ‘A broken heart is the sa-
 ‘crifices of the Lord,’ Psal. li. 17. So many
 pieces, so many sacrifices. Oh! take these, and

upon the altar which God hath set up, (the Lord Jesus Christ is our altar;) upon this altar, let us offer these sacrifices: and the Lord pour out upon us the spirit of compassion and compunction; the spirit of grace and supplication; that this day, as the rest, may be a day of atonement and reconciliation, wherein our God may be pacified towards us, and reconciled unto us, in the Lord Jesus. A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

S E R M O N II.

Preached at MILK-STREET, upon Saturday Evening, September 30. For the Preparation to the COVENANT.

The second USE; EXHORTATION.

SINCE covenant-violation, is a matter of so high a quarrel; as for the avenging whereof, God sends a sword upon a church or nation: for which, it is more than probable, the sword is upon us at this present, it having almost devoured Ireland already, and eaten up a great part of England also, Amos vii. 4. Let us engage our council, and all the interest we have in heaven and earth, for the taking up of this controversy; let us consider what we have to do, what way there is yet left us, for the reconciling of this quarrel,

else we, and our families, are all but the children of death and destruction: this sword that is drawn, and devoured so much Christian protestant flesh already, will, it is to be feared, go quite thro' the land, and in the pursuit of this quarrel, cut off the remnant, till our land be so desolate, and our cities waste, and England be made as Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of the fierce anger of Jehovah.

Somewhat I have spoken already in the former use, to this purpose, viz. 'To acknowledge our iniquities that we have transgressed against the Lord our God,' Jer. iii. 13. To get our hearts broken, for breaking the covenant; to lay it so to heart, that God may not lay it to our charge, &c. But this looks backward. Somewhat must be done, *de futuro* for time to come: that may not only compose the quarrel, but lay a sure foundation of an after peace between God and the kingdom. And for that purpose, a mean lies before us: an opportunity is held forth unto us by the hand of divine wisdom, and goodness, of known use and success among the people of God in former times; which is yet to me a gracious intimation, and a farther argument of hope from heaven, that God has not sworn against us in his wrath, nor sealed us up a people devoted to destruction, but hath yet a mind to enter into terms of peace and reconciliation with us, to receive us into grace and favour, to become our God, and to own us for his people; if yet, we will go forth to meet him, and accept of such honourable

terms as shall be propounded to us: and that
 is, by renewing our covenant with him; yea,
 by entering into a more full and firm cove-
 nant than ever heretofore. For as the quar-
 rel was raised about the covenant, so it must
 be a covenant more solid and substantial, that
 must compose the quarrel, as I shall shew you
 hereafter. And that is, the service and the
 privilege that lies before us; the work of the
 next day. So that me-thinks, I hear this use
 of exhortation, which now I would commend
 unto you speaking unto us in that language.
 Jer. l. 5. 'Come, let us join ourselves to the
 Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall not
 be forgotten.' It is the voice of the children
 of Israel, and the children of Judah, return-
 ing out of captivity. Ver. 4. 'The children
 of Israel shall come, they, and the children
 of Judah together; seeking the Lord,' whom
 they had lost, and inquiring the way to Zion;
 from whence their idolatry, and adulteries
 had cast them out; themselves become now
 like the doves of the valley, mourning and
 weeping, because they had perverted their
 way, and forgotten the Lord their God. Ver.
 4. 5. 'Going and weeping they shall go, and
 seek the Lord their God. They shall ask
 the way to Zion with their faces thither-
 ward. And if you inquire when this should
 be? The fourth verse tells you, in those days.
 And if you ask again, what days those are?
 Interpreters will tell us of a *threefold day*
 wherein this pro- *of making good*
 phesy or promise is to be ful- *the prophecy*

filled; that is, the literal or inchoative, evangelical or spiritual, universal or perfect day.

1 The literal First, There is a literal or inchoative day, here prophesied of, and that is already past, past long since; viz. in that day wherein the seventy years of the Babylonian captivity expired; then was this prophecy or promise begun, in part to be accomplished: at what time the captivity of Judah, and divers of Israel with them, upon their return out of Babylon, kept a solemn fast at the river 'Ahava, to afflict their souls 'before their God,' Ezra viii. 21. 'There may you see them going and weeping, 'to 'seek of him a right way for them, and their 'little ones:' There you have them seeking the Lord, and inquiring the way to Zion with their faces thitherward. And when they came home, you may hear some of their nobles and priests, calling upon them to enter into covenant; so Shechaniah spake unto Ezra, the princes, and the people, Ezra x. 2, 3. 'We have sinned against the Lord, &c. 'yet now there is hope in Israel concerning 'this thing. Now therefore let us make a 'covenant with our God.' And so you may find the Levites calling the people to confess their sins with weeping and supplications, in a day of humiliation, and at the end of it, to write, and swear, and seal a covenant with 'the Lord their God,' Neh. ix. 4, 5. This was the first day wherein this prophecy began to be fulfilled, in the very letter thereof.

The second day, is the evangel- 2. Day, evangel-
 ical day, wherein this pro- gelical.
 mise is fulfilled in a gospel or spiritual sense;
 namely, when the elect of God, of what na-
 tion or language soever, being all called the
 Israel of God, as is prophesied, Isa. xliv. 5.
 One shall say, I am the Lord's; and another
 shall call himself by the name of Jacob, &c.
 and surname himself by the name of Israel.
 I say, when these in their several generations
 and successions shall turn to the Lord their
 God, either from their Gentilism and paga-
 nism, as in their first conversion to Christia-
 nity; as Tertullian observes after the resur-
 rection of Christ, and the mission of the Holy
 Ghost. *Aspice exinde universas nationes ex vera-*
tine erroris humani emergentes ad Dominum
Deum, et ad Dominum Christum ejus. From
 that day forward, you might behold poor
 creatures of all nations and languages, creep-
 ing out of their dark holes and corners of
 blindness and idolatry, and betaking them
 to God and his Son Jesus Christ, as to their
 Law-giver and Saviour; or else turning from
 Antichristian superstition, and false ways of
 worship, as in the after, and more full con-
 version of churches or persons purging them-
 selves more and more, from the corruptions
 and mixtures of popery and superstitions, ac-
 cording to the degree of light and conviction,
 which should break out upon them, and ask-
 ing the way to Zion, *i. e.* the pure way of
 gospel worship, according to the fuller and
 clearer manifestations and revelations of the

mind of Christ in the gospel. This was fulfilled in Luther's time, and in all those afterseparations which any of the churches have made from Rome, and from those relicks, and remains of superstition and will-worship, wherewith themselves, and the ordinances of Jesus Christ have been defiled.

3. *Day, universal.* The third day wherein this prophecy or promise is to be made good, is that universal day, wherein both Jew and Gentile shall convert unto the Lord. That day of the restitution of all things, as some good divines conceive when 'ten men
' out of all languages of the nations, shall
' take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew,
' saying, We will go with you; for we have
' heard that God is with you,' Zech. viii. 23. And to what purpose is more fully expressed in the former verses, answering the prophecy in the text. Ver. 20. 'Thus saith the Lord of
' Hosts it shall come to pass, that there shall
' come people, and the inhabitants of many
' cities.' Ver. 21. 'And the inhabitants of
' one city shall go to another, saying, Let us
' go speedily to pray before the Lord, and to
' seek the Lord of hosts; I will go also.' Ver. 22. 'Yea, many people and strong nations
' shall come to seek the Lord of Hosts in Jeru-
' salem, and to pray before the Lord.

This I call the universal day, because as you see, there shall be such an abundance of confluence of cities, and people, and nations, combining together in an holy league and covenant, to seek the Lord. And a perfect day,

because the mind and will of the Lord shall be fully revealed and manifested to the saints, concerning the way of worship and government in the churches. The new Jerusalem, *i. e.* the perfect, exact, and punctual model of the government of Christ in the churches, shall then be let down from heaven. 'The light of the moon, being then to be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound,' Ezek. xliii. 11, 12, 13. Rev. xxi. 10, 11. Isa. xxx. 26.

By what hath been spoken, you may perceive under which of these days we are: past indeed the first, but not yet arrived at the third day; and therefore under the second day, that evangelical day; yet so, as if all the three days were met together in ours, while it seems to me, that we are upon the dawning of the third day: and this prophecy falling so pat, and full upon our times, as if we were not got beyond the literal; a little variance will do it. The children of Israel, and the children of Judah: Scotland and England, newly coming out of Babylon, antichristian Babylon, papal tyranny and usurpations, in one degree or other, going and weeping in the days of their solemn humiliations, bewailing their backslidings and rebellions, to seek the Lord their God, to seek pardon and reconciliation, to seek his face and favour, not only in the continuance, but

in the more full and sweet influential manifestations of his presence among them; and to that end, asking the way to Zion with their faces thitherward; that is inquiring after the pure way of gospel worship, with full purpose of heart; that when God shall reveal his mind to them, they will conform themselves to his mind according to that blessed prophecy and promise, Isa. ii. 3. 'He will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths,' &c. And that they may make all sure, that they may secure God and themselves against all future apostacies and backslidings, calling one upon another, and echoing back one to another. 'Come, let us join ourselves to the Lord, in a perpetual covenant that may not be forgotten.

You see by this time; I have changed my text, tho' not my project; to which purpose I shall remember that in the handling of these words, I must not manage my discourse, as if I were to make a new entire sermon upon the text, but only to improve the happy advantages it holds forth, for the pursuit and driving on of my present use of exhortation. Come, let us join, &c.

To this end therefore, from these words, I will propound and endeavour to satisfy these three queries. 1. What? 2. Why? 3. How?

I. What the duty is, to which they mutually stir up one another?

II. Why, or upon what considerations?

III. How, or in what manner this service is to be performed?

And in all these you shall see what proportion the text holds with the times. The duty in our text, with the duty in our hands, pressing them on still in an exhortatory way.

For the first, *scil.* What the duty is?

Ans^w. You see that in the text, is to join themselves to the Lord, by a solemn covenant; and so is that which we have now in our hands, to join ourselves to the Lord by a covenant; how far they correspond, will appear in the sequel.

This is the first and main end of a covenant between God and his people, as I have shewed you, 'to join themselves to the Lord. The sons of the stranger that join themselves to the Lord, &c. and take hold of this covenant,' Isa. lvi. 6.

This, I say, is the first and main end of the covenant in the text: the second is subordinate unto it; namely, to inquire the way to union, *i. e.* to inquire the way and manner, how God would be worshipped; that they might dishonour and provoke him no more, by their idolatries and superstitions, which had been brought in upon the ordinances of God, by the means of apostate kings, and priests, and prophets, as in Jeroboam's and Ahab's reigns, &c. and for which they had been carried into captivity.

And such is the covenant that lies before us: in the first place, as I say to join ourselves to the Lord, to be knit unseparably unto him, that he may be our God, and we may be his people. And in the next place, as subservient

hereunto, to ask the way to Zion; to inquire and search by all holy means, sanctified to that purpose, what is that pure way of gospel worship; that we and our children after us may worship the God of spirits, the God of truth, in spirit, and in truth, John iv. 24. In spirit opposed to carnal ways of will-worship and inventions of men; and in truth, opposed to false hypocritical shews and pretences since the father seeks for such to worship him.

Now, that this is the main scope and aim of this covenant before us, will appear, if you read and ponder it with due consideration; I will therefore read it to you distinctly, this evening, besides the reading of it again to-morrow, when you come to take it; and when I have read it, I will answer the main and most material objections, which seem to make it inconsistent with these blessed ends and purposes. Attend diligently while I read it to you.

THE COVENANT*.

“**W**E noblemen, barons, knights, gentlemen, citizens, burgessees, ministers of the gospel, and commons of all sorts in the kingdoms of England, Scotland, and Ireland, by the providence of God living under one king, and being of one reformed religion, having before our eyes the glory of

* This covenant is here printed at large, that the reader may have it at hand, to compare the objections and answers with the several passages of the covenant to which they relate.

God, and the advancement of the kingdom
of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the
honour and happiness of the king's majesty
and his posterity, and the true public liberty,
safety, and peace of the kingdoms, wherein
every ones private condition is included; and
calling to mind the treacherous and bloody
plots, conspiracies, attempts, and practices
of the enemies of God, against the true reli-
gion, and professors thereof in all places, es-
pecially in these three kingdoms ever since
the reformation of religion, and how much
their rage, power and presumption, are of late,
and at this time increased and exercised;
whereof the deplorable state of the church
and kingdom of Ireland, the distressed estate
of the church and kingdom of England, and
the dangerous estate of the church and king-
dom of Scotland, are present and public tes-
timonies; we have now at last, (after other
means of supplication, remonstrance, protes-
tations, and sufferings) for the preservation
of ourselves and our religion, from utter
ruin and destruction, according to the com-
mendable practice of these kingdoms in for-
mer times, and the example of God's people
in other nations; after mature deliberation,
resolved and determined to enter into a mu-
tual and solemn league and covenant, where-
in we all subscribe, and each one of us for
himself, with our hands lifted up to the most
high God to swear:"

I. THAT we shall sincerely, really and
constantly, through the grace of God endea-

Numb. III.

A a

your in our several places and callings, the preservation of the reformed religion in the church of Scotland, in doctrine, worship, discipline and government, against our common enemies; the reformation of religion in the kingdoms of England and Ireland, in doctrine, worship, discipline and government, according to the word of God, and the example of the best reformed churches; and shall endeavour to bring the churches of God in the three kingdoms, to the nearest conjunction and uniformity in religion, confession of faith, form of church government, directory for worship and catechizing; that we and our posterity after us, may as brethren, live in faith and love, and the Lord may delight to dwell in the midst of us.

II. That we shall in like manner, without respect of persons, endeavour the extirpation of popery, prelacy, (that is church-government, by archbishops, bishops, their chancellor and commissaries, deans, deans and chapters, archdeacons, and all other ecclesiastical officers depending on that hierarchy, superstition, heresy, schism, profaneness, and whatsoever shall be found to be contrary to sound doctrine, and the power of godliness; lest we partake in other men's sins, and thereby be in danger to receive of their plagues, and that the Lord may be one, and his name one in the three kingdoms.

III. We shall with the same sincerity, reality and constancy, in our several vocations endeavour with our estates and lives mutually

to preserve the rights and privileges of the parliaments, and the liberties of the kingdoms, and to preserve and defend the king's majesty's person and authority, in the preservation and defence of the true religion, and liberties of the kingdoms, that the world may bear witness with our consciences of our loyalty, and that we have no thoughts or intentions to diminish his majesty's just power and greatness.

IV. We shall also with all faithfulness endeavour the discovery of all such as have been, or shall be incendiaries, malignants, or evil instruments, by hindering the reformation of religion, dividing the king from his people, or one of the kingdoms from another, or making any faction or parties amongst the people, contrary to this league and covenant, that they may be brought to public trial, and receive condign punishment, as the degree of their offences shall require or deserve, or others having power from them for that effect, shall judge convenient.

V. And whereas the happiness of a blessed peace between these kingdoms, denied in former times to our progenitors, is by the good providence of God granted unto us, and hath been lately concluded, and settled by both parliaments, we shall each one of us, according to our place and interest, endeavour that they remain conjoined in a firm peace and union to all posterity; and that justice may be done upon the wilful opposers thereof, in manner expressed in the preceding article.

VI. We shall also according to our places and callings in this common cause of religion, liberty, and peace of the kingdoms, assist and defend all those that enter into this league and covenant, in the maintaining and pursuing thereof, and shall not suffer ourselves directly or indirectly by whatsoever combination, persuasion, or terror, to be divided and withdrawn from this blessed union and conjunction, whether to make defection to the contrary part, or to give ourselves to a detestable indifferency or neutrality in this cause which so much concerneth the glory of God, the good of the kingdoms, and honour of the king; but shall all the days of our lives zealously and constantly continue therein against, all opposition, and promote the same according to our power, against all lets and impediments whatsoever; and what we are not able ourselves to suppress or overcome, we shall reveal and make known, that it may be timely prevented or removed; all which we shall do as in the fight of God.

And because these kingdoms are guilty of many sins and provocations against God, and his son Jesus Christ, as is too manifest by our present distresses and dangers, the fruits thereof; we profess and declare before God and the world, our unfeigned desire to be humbled for our own sins, and for the sins of these kingdoms, especially, that we have not as we ought, valued the inestimable benefit of the gospel, that we have not laboured for the purity and power thereof, and that we have not

endeavoured to receive Christ in our hearts,
or to walk worthy of him in our lives,
which are the causes of other sins and trans-
gressions, so much abounding amongst us; and
our true and unfeigned purpose, desire, and
endeavour for ourselves, and all others under
our power and charge, both in public and
private, in all duties we owe to God and
man, to amend our lives, and each one to go
before another in the example of a real refor-
mation, that the Lord may turn away his
wrath, and heavy indignation, and establish
these churches and kingdoms in truth and
peace. And this covenant we make in the
presence of almighty God, the searcher of
all hearts, with a true intention to perform
the same, as we shall answer at that great day,
when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclo-
sed; most humbly beseeching the Lord to
strengthen us by his Holy Spirit for this end,
and to bless our desires and proceedings with
such success, as may be deliverance and safe-
ty to his people, and encouragement to other
Christian churches groaning under, or in
danger of the yoke of Antichristian tyranny;
to join in the same or like association and co-
venant to the glory of God, the enlargement
of the kingdom of Jesus Christ, and the peace
and tranquillity of Christian kingdoms and
common-wealths.

THIS brethren, is the covenant before us;
to which God and his parliament do invite
us this day; wherein the ends propounded,
lie fair to every impartial eye.

The first article in this covenant, binding us to the reformation of religion; and the last article, to the reformation of our lives. In both, we join ourselves to the Lord, and swear to ask and receive from his lips, the law of this reformation: read them else again and consider.

And truly, this is a why, as well as a what (that I may a little prevent myself) a motive of the first magnitude. Oh! for a people or person to be joined unto the Lord; to be made one with the most high God of heaven and earth, before whom, and to whom we swear, is a privilege of unspeakable worth and excellency. 'Seemeth it (said David once to Saul's servants) 'a small thing in your eyes 'to be son-in-law to a king, seeing I am 'poor man? 1 Sam. xviii. 23. Seemeth it may I say, a small thing to you, for poor creatures to be joined, and married, as it were to the great God, the living God; who are so much worse than nothing, by how much sin is worse than vanity? yea, to be one with him as Christ saith in that heavenly prayer of his; as he and his Father is one, John xviii. 21, 22, 23. 'That they may be one, as thou 'Father art in me, and I in thee; that they 'also may be one with us.' And again, 'that 'they may be one, even as we are one.' Ye are perfect in one; not indeed, in the perfection of that unity, but in unity of that perfection not made perfect in a perfection of equality but of conformity.

This is the fruit of a right managed cove

nant; and the greatest honour that poor mortality is capable of. Moses stands admiring of it, Deut. xxxii. 33. You may read the place at your leisure. But against this blessed service and truth, are there mustered, and led up an whole regiment of objections, under the conduct of the father of lies; though some of them may seem to have some shadow of truth; and therefore so much the more carefully to be examined. I shall deal only with some of the chief commanders of them, if they be conquered the rest will vanish of their own accord.

OBJECTIONS PROPOUNDED AND ANSWERED.

Object. 1. If this were the end of this service, yet it were need- *Object. 1.* *It is needless.* since we have done it over and over again, in our former protestations and covenants; and so this repetition may seem to be a profanation of so holy an ordinance, by making of it so ordinary, and nothing else, but a taking of God's name in vain. To this I answer.

Ans. 1. It cannot be done too oft; if it be done according to the law and order of so solemn an ordinance.

2. The people in the text might have made the same objection; it lay as strong against the work, to which they encourage one another: for surely, this was not the first time they engaged themselves to God by way of covenant; but having broken their former covenants, they thought it their privilege, and not their burden to renew it again, and to make it more full, stable, and impregnable than ever;

‘ a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten;’ which hints a

3. *Ans.* And that is, there was never yet so full and strict a covenant tendered to us since we were a people. Former covenants have had their defect and failings, like the best of God's people: but I may say of this in reference to other covenants, as Solomon of his good house-wife, in reference to other women. ‘ Other daughters have done well, but thou hast exceeded them all.’ Other covenants have done well, but this hath exceeded them all; like Paul among the apostles, it goes beyond them all, though it seems to be born out of due time.

Now, if your leases and covenants among men, be either lame or forfeited; need men persuade you to have them renewed and perfected? Of how much greater concernment is this, between God and us, oh! you of little faith?

4. You receive the sacrament of the Lord's supper once a month, and some will not be kept off, tho' they have no part, nor portion in that mystery, say the ministers of Christ what they can; and the sacrament is but the seal of the covenant; consider it, and be convinced.

We swear to conform to Scotland and other churches in our reformation. *Object.* 2. But secondly, it is objected, there be some clauses in this covenant, that serve rather to divide us further from God, than join us nearer to him; as binding us to inquire the way to Zion of

en rather than of God; to receive the law of reformation from Scotland, and other churches, and not from the lips of the great prophet of the churches.

Ex gr. In the article, we swear first to maintain the religion, as it is already reformed in Scotland, in doctrine, government, and discipline; wherein, first the most shall swear they know not what; and secondly, we swear to conform ourselves here in England, to their government and discipline in Scotland which is presbyterial, and for ought we know, as much tyrannical, and more Antichristian, than that of prelacy, which we swear to extirpate; and, some have not been afraid to call it the Antichrist that is now in the world.

Answ. 1. To whom I first answer, beseeching them in the bowels of compassion, and spirit of meekness, to take heed of such rash and unchristian censures, least God hear, and displease him; and they themselves possibly be found to commit the sin, and incur the wrath of them that 'call evil good, and good evil,' *1. v. 20.*

Secondly, Whereas they object, that many shall swear to they know not what, the most being totally ignorant of the discipline of Scotland, and very few understanding it distinctly. I would have these remember and consider two examples in scripture. *Two instances.* The one of king Josiah, *2 Chron. xxxiv. 30, 31, 32.* the other of the women and children in Nehemiah's time, *Neh. x. 28.* Josiah (as the text tells us) not

being above eight years of age; as verse 2. 'While he was yet young, began to seek after the Lord God of David his father; and in the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem,' &c. And this purging and reformation he did by covenant, wherein he swore, to 'walk after the Lord, and to keep his commandments and his testimonies, and his statutes.' Which surely, at that age we cannot conceive he did distinctly and universally understand; no more could all the men, their wives and their sons, and their daughters that took the covenant (in Nehemiah's time) understand all things in particular to which that covenant did bind them; since they did enter into a curse, and an oath, not only to refuse all inter-marriages with the heathen, as verse 30. but also to walk in God's law which was given by Moses, and to observe and do all the commandments of the Lord and his judgments, and his statutes.

Surely there were in this multitude not an inconsiderable number that were not acquainted with all the moral precepts, judicial laws and ceremonial statutes, which God commanded the people by the hand of Moses.

Two objections against these instances. There be two things I know that may be replied against these instances.

1. That of those women and children in Nehemiah, it is said in the same place, 'they were of understanding.' Verse 28. 'Every one having knowledge, and having understanding.' Ver. 29. They clave unto the

brethren, their nobles, and entered into a curse,' &c.

2. That there is a great difference between the laws and statutes to which they swore, and this government and discipline to which they swear in this covenant. Those laws and statutes were ordained immediately of God himself; and therefore being infallibly right; unquestionably holy, and just, and good; Joshua and the people might lawfully swear observance to them with an implicit faith; but not so in a government and discipline set up by man, by a church, be it never so pure and holy: for their light being but a borrowed light, and they not privileged with an infallible Spirit (as the apostles) their resolutions and ordinances may be liable to mistake and error; and therefore, to swear observance to them by an implicit faith, is more than comes to their share, and as unwarrantable as it is unsafe for a people or person to do, who are yet ignorant or unsatisfied in the whole, or in any particular.

To these objections I rejoin: *Answer to these*
 first, that that description of the *objections*.
 covenanters in Nehemiah, that 'they were of understanding, and knowledge,' supposeth not a distinct actual cognizance of every particular ordinance, judgment, statute, and provision, in all the three laws, moral, judicial; ceremonial, in every one that took the covenant; that being not only needless but impossible; but it implies only a capacity to receive instruction and information in the

things they swore unto, tho' at present they were ignorant of many of the severals contained in that oath. And so far this rule obtained among us; children that are not yet come to understanding, and fools, being not admitted to this service, as not capable of instruction.

Ans. 2. To the second (tho' more considerable) yet the answer is not very difficult for,

First, We do not swear to observe that discipline, but to preserve it: I may preserve that, which in point of conscience I cannot observe, or not, at least, swear to observe.

Secondly, We swear to preserve it, not in opposition to any other form of government that may be found agreeable to the word, but in opposition against a common enemy, which is a clause of so wide a latitude, and easy a suggestion, as the tenderest conscience need not kick at it; this preservation relating not so much to the government, as to the persons of the nation under this government; not so much to preserve it, as to preserve them in it, against a prelatiſcal party at home, or a popiſh party abroad, that should attempt by violence to destroy them, or to force another government upon them, that should be against the word of God; under which latitude, I see not but we might enter into the like covenant with Lutherans, or other reformed churches, whose government, discipline, and worship, is yet exceedingly corrupted with degenerate mixtures.

Thirdly, Neither in the preservation of their government, &c. nor in the reformation of

urs, do we swear to any thing of man's; but to what shall be found to be the mind of Christ. Witness that clause, article 1. According to the word of God: so that upon the matter, it is no more than Josiah and the people in Nehemiah swore to; namely, 'what shall appear to be the statutes and laws which Christ hath left in his word, concerning the regiment of his church?'

Fourthly, Nay, not so much; for we are not yet called to swear the observation of any kind of government, that is, or shall be presented to us, but to endeavour the reformation of religion in doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, according to the word of God. In the faithful and impartial search and pursuit whereof, if Scotland, or any of the reformed churches, can hold us forth any clearer light than our own, we receive it not as our rule, but as such an help to expound our rule, as Christ himself hath allowed us, Cant. i. 7. 8. 2 Cor. xi. 16. Philip. iv. 8. Theff. i, 7, 8. In which case, we are bound to kiss not the lips only, but the very feet of them that shall be able to shew us 'the way to Zion,' Isa. lii. 7.

So that still, it is not the voice of the churches but of Christ in the churches, that we covenant to listen to, in this pursuit; that is to say, that we will follow them, as they follow Christ: and when all is done, and a reformation (through the assistance and blessing of the Lord Jesus Christ, that great king and prophet of his church) resolved on according to Numb. III.

according to this rule thus interpreted, under what notion or obligation the observation of it shall be commended to us, *sub judice lis est*; it is yet in the bosom and breast of authority; we are as yet called to swear to nothing in this kind. So much in reference to the instances.

Ans. 3. I answer further to the satisfying of this second doubt, that by this covenant we are bound no more to conform to Scotland, than Scotland to us: the stipulation being mutual, and this stipulation binding us not so much to conform one to another as both of us to the word; wherein, if we can meet, who would not look upon it, as upon the precious fruit of Christ's prayer, John xvii. 20, 21. 'That they might be one,' as we 'are one?' And the beauty and safety of both nations, and of as many of the churches, as the Lord our God shall persuade to come into this holy and blessed association?

We swear to extirpate that which may be the government of the gospel. *Object.* 3. A third objection falls upon the second article of this covenant; wherein it is feared by some, that we swear to extirpate that, which for ought we know, upon due inquiry, may be found the way to Zion, the way of evangelical government, which Christ and his apostles have set up in the church.

Ans. Where lies that, think you? In what clause or word of the article? Who can tell? Surely not in popery; or if there be any that think that the way; I could wish their per-

ons in Rome, since their hearts are there already. Is it in superstition? Nay, superstition properly consisting in will-worship, 'teaching for doctrine the traditions of men;' this cannot be the way to Zion, which Christ hath chalked out to us in his word. No more can heresy, which is the opposition to sound doctrine; nor schism, which is the rent of the church's peace; nor profaneness, the poison of her conversation. None but superstitious heretics, schismatics, profane persons, will call these the way to Zion; nor these neither, under the name and notion of superstition, heresy, schism, profaneness; for the heretic will not call his doctrine heresy; nor the superstitious his innovation superstition; nor the schismatic his turbulent practises schism; nor lastly, the profane person his lewdness profaneness; tho' they love the thing, they hate the name.

And this, before we go further, occasions another objection, which you must give me leave both to make and answer in a parenthesis, and then I will return.

Object. How then can we *Object.* Who swear the extirpation of these, *shall judge what* since, who shall be judge? *is heresy?* &c. While some will be ready to call that schism and superstition, &c. which is not; and others deny that to be heresy, superstition, schism, &c. which is?

Ans. 1. To which I answer, by the same argument, we ought not to covenant against popery and drunkenness, sabbath-breaking,

nor any other sin whatsoever, there being nothing so gross, but it will find some friends to justify, and plead for it; which if we shall not condemn till all parties be agreed on the verdict, we shall never proceed to judgment, while the world stands.

2. The word must be the rule and the judge, say men what they please, *pro* or *con*.

3. And if the matter be indeed so disputable, that it lies not in my faculty to pronounce sentence; I have my dispensation to suspend, till the word determine the controversy.

I now return; if then in none of these, the doubt must of necessity lie in that word prelacy. And is that indeed the way of gospel government? Is that it indeed, which bears away the bell of *jure divino*? What is it then that hath destroyed all gospel order, and government and worship, in these kingdoms, as in other places of the Christian world, even down to the ground? Hath it not been prelacy? What is it that hath taken down a teaching ministry, and set up in the room a teaching ceremony? Is it not prelacy? What is it that hath silenced, suspended, imprisoned, deprived, banished, so many goodly, learned, able ministers of the gospel; yea, and killed some of them with their unheard of cruelties, and thrust into their places, idol, idle shepherds; dumb dogs that cannot bark (unless it were at the flock of Christ; so they learned of their masters, both to bark and bite too) greedy dogs that could never have enough, that did

ear out the loins and bowels of their own people for gain, heap living upon living, preferment upon preferment; swearing, drunken, unclean priests, that taught nothing but rebellion in Israel, and caused people to abhor the sacrifice of the Lord: Arminian, popish, idolatrous, vile wretches, such as, had Job been alive, he would not have set with the dogs of his flock; who, I say, brought in these? Did not prelacy? What hath hindered the reformation of religion all this while in doctrine, government, and worship? Prelacy, a generation of men they were, that never had a vote for Jesus Christ; yea, what hath poisoned and adulterated religion in all these branches, and hath let in popery and profaneness upon the kingdom like a flood, for the raising of their own pomp and greatness, but prelacy?

In a word, prelacy it is, that hath set its impure and imperious feet, one upon the church, the other upon the state, and hath made both serve as Pharaoh did the Israelites, with rigour, *Exod. i. 14*. Surely, their government hath been a yoke, which neither we, nor our fathers were able to bear.

Now, that which hath done this, and a thousand times more violence and mischief to Christ and his people, than the tongue or pen of man is able to express; can that be the way of, or to Zion? Can that be the government of Christ and his churches?

Object. Aye, but their be that will tell us, these have been the faults of the persons, and not of the calling?

Ans. So cry some indeed, that ye like the men, as well as their calling, and would justify the persons as well as the office, but that their wickedness is made so manifest, that impudency itself cannot deny it.

The abuses in the church, not the fault of the persons of the prelates only, but of the calling.

But is it indeed only the fault of the men, not of the calling? What meant then that saying of queen Elizabeth, "That when she had made a bishop, she had spoiled a preacher?"

Was it only a jest?

2. And I wish we had not too just cause to add, the man too. Surely of the most of them we may say, as once Arnobius spake of the Gentiles, *apud vos optimi censentur quia comparatio pessimorum sic facit.* Give me leave to vary it a little: he was a good bishop, that was not the worst man; but if there were some of a better complexion, who yet, *apparent rari nantes in gurgite vasto*, were very rarely discovered in their episcopal see; yet,

3. Look into their families, and they were for the most part the vilest in the diocess, a very nest of unclean birds; and,

4. If you had looked into their courts and consistories, you would have thought you had been in Caiaphas'-hall, where no other trade was driven, but the crucifying of Christ in his members.

5. But fifthly, produce me one in this last succession of bishops (I hope the last) that had not his hands imbrued more or less in the blood of the faithful ministry, (I say not

ministers, but ministry) produce a man amongst them all, that durst be so conscientious as to lay down his bishoprick, rather than he would lay violent hands upon a non-conformable minister, though he had failed but in one point of their compass of ceremonies, when their great master the pope of Canterbury commanded it, although both for life, learning, and orthodox religion, their consciences did compel them to confess with Pilate, 'we find no fault in this just person,' Matth. xxvii. 24.

I say, produce me such a bishop amongst the whole bunch, in this latter age, and I will down on my knees, and ask them forgiveness. Oh! it was sure a mischievous poisoned soil, in which, whatsoever plant was set did hardly ever thrive after.

5. But yet further, was not the calling as bad as the men? You may as well say so of the papacy in Rome, for surely the prelacy of England, which we swore to extirpate, was the very same fabric and model of ecclesiastical regiment, that is in that Antichristian world; yea, such an evil it is, that some divines, venerable for their great learning, as well as for their eminent holiness, did conceive sole episcopal jurisdiction, to be the very feat of the beast, upon which the fifth angel is now pouring out his vial, which is the reason that the men of that kingdom 'gnaw their tongues for pain, and blaspheme the God of heaven,' Rev. xvi. 10, 11.

*Some prelacy
lawful.*

Object. Aye, but it is there-
forepleaded further against this
clause, that although it may be prelacy with
all its adjuncts and accidents of archbishops,
chancellors, and commissaries, deans, &c.
may have haply been the cause of these evils
that have broken in upon us, and perhaps
Antichristian; yet should we therefore swear
the extirpation of all prelacy, or episcopacy
whatsoever; since there may be found per-
haps in scripture, an episcopacy or prelacy,
which circumcised from these exuberant
members and officers, may be that govern-
ment Christ hath bequeathed his church in
the time of the gospel?

Ans. Now we shall quickly close this
business. For,

1. It is this prelacy, thus clothed, thus cir-
cumstanced, which we swear to extirpate;
read else the clause again, prelacy, that is,
church government by archbishops, bishops,
their chancellors, &c. Not every, or all kinds
of prelacy; not prelacy in the latitude of the
notion thereof.

2. And secondly, let us join issue upon this
point, and make no more words of it; if there
be an episcopacy or prelacy found in the
word, as the way of gospel-government, which
Christ hath bequeathed the churches, and
this be made appear, we are so far from
swearing to extirpate such a prelacy, as that
rather we are bound by virtue of this oath to
entertain it, as the mind and will of Jesus
Christ.

And this might suffice to warrant our covenanting to extirpate this prelacy, save that only, yet some seem conscientiously to scruple this in the last place.

Object. That they see not what *Prelacy established by law.* there is to warrant our swearing, to extirpate that which is established by the law of the land, till the same law have abolished it.

To which I answer.

Ans. 1. If the law of the land had abolished it, we need not swear the extirpation of it.

2. In this oath, the parliaments of both kingdoms, go before us, who having the legislative power in their hands, have also *potestatem vitæ et necis*, over laws, as well as over persons, and may as well put to death the evil laws that do offend against the kingdom, and the welfare of it, as the evil persons that do offend against the laws.

3. Who therefore, thirdly, if they may lawfully annul and abolish laws that are found in sin against the law of God, and the good of the kingdom, may as lawfully bind themselves by an oath, to use the uttermost of their endeavours, to annul and abolish those laws; their oath being nothing else but a solemn engagement to endeavour to perform what they have warrantably resolved upon; and with the same equity may they bind the kingdom to assist them in so doing.

4. Which is all that the people are engaged by this covenant; *scil.* Not to outrun the

parliament in this extirpation, but to follow and serve them in it, by such concurrence as they may expect from each person in their stations and callings; for that clause expressed in the first and third article, is to be understood in all.

Parliament bound by oath to maintain laws. *Object.* If it be yet objected that the members of parliament have at one time or other, sworn to preserve the laws; and therefore to swear to endeavour the extirpation of prelacy which is established by law, is to contradict their own oath and run the hazard of perjury: It is easy for any one to observe and answer.

Ans. 1. That by the same argument, neither may king and parliament together change or annul a law, though found destructive to the good of the kingdoms, since his majesty, as well as his subjects, is bound up under the same oath at his coronation.

2. But again, there is a vast difference between the members of parliament, simply considered in their private capacities, where they may be supposed to take an oath to maintain the laws of the land; and that public capacity of a parliament, whereby they are judges of those laws, and may, as I said before, endeavour the removal of such as are found pernicious to the church or state, and make such as will advantage the welfare of others; his majesty being bound by his coronation-oath, to confirm these laws, *quas vult* *gus elegeret*, which the commons shall agree upon, and present unto his majesty.

Object. Aye, but it seems this objection lies all and strong upon them that stand in their single private stations.

Answ. I answer, that if there be any such oath, which yet I have never seen, nor heard of, unless the objection mean that clause in the late parliament protestation, wherein we vow and protest to maintain and defend the lawful rights and liberties of the subject.

Surely, neither in that nor this, do we swear against a lawful endeavour to get any such laws or clause of the law repealed and abolished, which is found a wrong, rather than a right, and the bondage, rather than the liberty of the subject, as prelacy was. Had we indeed taken the bishop's oath, or the like, never to have given our consent to have the government by episcopacy, with its ends, &c. changed or altered, we had brought ourselves into a woful snare; but blessed be God that snare is broken, and we are escaped; while in the mean time without all doubt, the subject may as lawfully use all lawful means to get that law removed, which yet he hath promised or sworn to obey, while it remains, when it proves prejudicial to the public safety and welfare; as a poor captive, that hath peradventure sworn obedience to the Turk, (while he remains in his possession) may notwithstanding use all fair endeavours for an escape or ransom. Or a prentice that is bound to obey his master; yet when he finds his service turned into a bondage, use lawful means to obtain his freedom.

But once more to answer both objections; it is worth your inquiry, whether the plea of a legal establishment of this prelacy sworn against in this covenant, be not rather a tradition, than any certain, or confessed truth: Sure I am, we have it from the hands of persons of worth and honour; the able secretaries of laws and antiquities in our kingdom, that there is no such law or statute to be found upon the file, among our records. Which assertion, if it cannot find faith; we will once more, join issue with the patrons or followers of this prelacy, upon this point, that when they produce that law or statute which doth enact and establish prelacy, as is here branched in the article, we will then give them a fuller answer, or yield the question.

To conclude therefore, since this prelacy in the article, this many headed monster of archbishops, bishops, their chancellors and commissaries, deans, deans and chapters, archdeacons, and all other ecclesiastical officers depending on that hierarchy, is the beast wherewith we fight in this covenant, which hath been found so destructive to church and state; let us not fear to take this sword of the covenant of God into our hands, and say to this enemy of Christ, as Samuel said once to Agag, (at what time he said within himself, surely the bitterness of death is past) 'As thy sword hath made women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among women,' 1 Sam. xv. 32, 33. So hath prelacy

attered itself, finding such a party to stand
p on its side among the rotten lords and
ommons, the debauched gentry, and abused
people of the kingdom: 'Surely the bitter-
ness of death is past. I sit as a queen, and
shall not know widowhood, or loss of chil-
dren.' In the midst of this security and
pride, the infallible forerunners of her down-
fall, let us call her forth, and say, as thy sword,
prelacy, hath made many women childless,
many a faithful minister peopleless, houseless
and libertiless, their wives husbandless, their
children and their congregations fatherless,
and pastorless, and guideless; so thy mother,
papacy, shall be made childless among har-
lots, your diocess bishopless, and your sees
lordless, and your places shall know you no
more. Come, my brethren, I say, and fear
not to take this Agag, (prelacy, I mean, not
the prelates) and hew it in pieces before the
Lord.

Object. 4. A fourth and main *This covenant is*
objection that troubles many, *not purely religi-*
, that in the following article *ous, as that in*
there are divers things of a *the text.*
other nature than falls within the compass
and list of such a covenant, as that which the
text holds forth, 'to join ourselves to the
Lord.' There be state-matters, and such
too, as are full of doubt, and perhaps of
'As a danger, to be sworn unto.

Answ. I shall answer, first, the general
charge, and then some of the particulars
which are most material.

Numb. III.

C c

1. *In general.* In general, I answer, there is nothing in the body of this covenant which is not either purely religious, or which lies not in a tendency to religion, conducing to the securing and promoting thereof. And as in

the expounding the commandments, divine take this rule, that that command which forbids a sin, forbids also all the conducive and provocations to that sin, all the tendencies to it: and that command which enjoins a duty, enjoins all the mediums and advances to that duty, as the schools say, *moderata cadit sub precepto*; circumstances fall within the latitude of the command: so in religious covenants, not only those things which are of the substance and integrals of religion, but even the collaterals and subserviencies, that tend either to the establishing or advancing of religion, may justly be admitted within the verge and pale of the covenant. The cities of refuge had their suburbs appointed by God, as well as their habitations, and even they also were counted holy. The rights and privileges of the parliaments, and the liberties of the kingdom, mentioned in the third article; they are the suburbs of the gospel, and an inheritance bequeathed by God to nations and kingdoms, and under that notion holy. Concerning which a people may lawfully reply to the unjust demands of emperors, kings, or states, as Naboth once to Ahab, when demanded to yield up

his vineyard to his majesty: 'God forbid, that I should give the inheritance of my father,' 1 Kings xxi. 3. These be the out-works of religion, the lines of communication, as I may so say, for the defence of this city; which the prelates well knew, and therefore you see, it was their great design, first by policy to have surpris'd; and when that would not do, then by main strength of battle to storm these out-works: well knowing, that if they once had won these, they could quickly be masters also of the holy city, religion itself, and done what they pleased. And therefore the securing of these out-works must of necessity be taken into the same councils and covenant with religion itself.

This premis'd in general, we shall easily and apace satisfy the particular scruples and queries as I go.

Particular objections or scruples. 1. Ignorance in them

1. *Scruple.* The most part that swear this covenant, are at a great degree, if not totally, ignorant what the rights and privileges of the parliament, and the liberties of the kingdoms are, and how can they then swear to maintain they know not what?

that take this covenant, of the rights and privileges of parliament.

Answ. 1. By the same argument no man, very few, might lawfully swear to maintain the king's prerogatives in the oaths of allegiance and supremacy; nor the king himself swear to maintain the liberties of the

subject, as he doth in his oath at his coronation.

2. But there is hardly any person so ignorant, but knows there are privileges belonging to the parliaments, and liberties belonging to the subject.

3. And that it is the duty of every subject according to his place and power, to maintain these; so that in taking of this covenant, we swear to do no more than our duty binds us to; in which there is no danger, tho' we do not in every point know how far that duty extends in every branch and several thereof.

4. In swearing to do my duty, whether to God or man, if I be ignorant of many particulars, I oblige myself to these things.

1. To use the best means to inform myself of the particulars.

2. To conform myself to what I am informed to be my duty. Which yet in this case in hand, doth admit of a further latitude, namely, that which lies in the very word and letter of this article (as in most of the rest) in our several vocations; which doth not bind every one to the same degree of knowledge, nor the same way of preservation: for example, I do not conceive every magistrate is bound to know so much, no nor endeavour to know so much as parliament men; nor every member of parliament so much as judges; nor ministers so much as the lawyers; nor ordinary people so much as ministers; nor servants so much as masters.

or all to preserve them the same way; parliament-men by demanding them, lawyers by pleading, judges by giving the sense and mind of the law, ministers by preaching, magistrates by defending, people by assisting, praying, yielding obedience, &c. All, if the exigencies arise so high, and the state call for it, by engaging their estates and lives, in case they be invaded by an unlawful power. And in case of ignorance, the thing we bind ourselves to is this, that if at any time any particular shall be in question, what the parliament shall make appear to be their right, or the liberty of the subject, we promise to contribute such assistance for the preservation or preparation thereof, as the nature of the thing, and wisdom of the state shall call for at our hands, in our several places.

2. *Scruple.* But some are offended, while they conceive in the same article, that the clause wherein we swear the preservation and defence of the king's

Object. 2. The king's person and authority in the preservation of religion, &c.

person and authority, doth lie under some restraint, by that limitation; in the preservation and defence of the true religion, and the liberties of the kingdom. To which we reply.

Ans. 1. It maintains him as far as he is king: he may be a man, but sure no king, without the lists and verge of religion and laws, it being religion and laws that make him a king.

2. It maintains his person and estate, as far

as his majesty himself doth desire and expect to be defended*: for, sure his justice cannot desire to be defended against, but in the preservation of religion and laws; and his wisdom cannot expect it; since he cannot believe that they will make conscience of defending his person, who make no conscience of preserving religion and the laws; I mean, when the ruin of his person and authority may advance their own cursed designs. They that are for their ends, will defend his person and authority against religion and liberties of the kingdom, will with the same conscience defend their own ends against his person and authority, when they have power in their hands. The Lord deliver his majesty from such defenders, by what names or titles so ever they be called.

3. Who doubts, but that religion and laws (wherein the rights and liberties of kingdoms are bound up) are the best security of the persons and authority of kings and governors? And the while kings will defend these, these will defend kings? It being impossible that princes should suffer violence or indignity, while they are within the mutation of religion and laws; or if the prince suffer, these must of necessity suffer with him.

4. I make a question, whether this limitation lie any more upon the defence of the king's person and authority, than it doth

* See his majesty's declarations.

upon the rights and privileges of parliaments, and the liberties of the kingdom, since there is no point or stop in the article to appropriate it more to the defence of the king's person and authority, than to the preservation of the rights and privileges of the parliaments, and the liberties of the kingdoms?

5. And lastly, this clause is not to be understood exclusive, as excluding all other cases wherein the kingdoms stand bound to preserve his majesty's person and authority, but only *pro subiecta materia*, as expressing that case wherein the safety of his person and authority, doth most highly concern both king and kingdoms, especially at such a time as this is, when both are so furiously and implacably encountered by a malignant army of desperate paracides, papists, and their prelatical party.

These objections answered, and difficulties removed, we proceed to the examining of the rest of the particulars, in the following articles.

The discovery of incendiaries or malignants that have been, or shall be: to *Fourth article.* which the fourth article binds *Discovery of incendiaries and malignants.* us: doth it not lie also in a necessary tendency to the securing and preserving of this covenant inviolable with the most high God, in point, of reformation? For can we hope a thorough reformation, according to the mind of Christ, if opposers of reformation may escape Scot-free, undiscovered and unpunished? Or can

we indeed love or promote a reformation, and in the mean time countenance or conceal the enemies of it? This is clear, yet it wants not a scruple; and that peradventure which may trouble a sincere heart.

This oath will *Object.* It is this, having *bind us to discover children, or* once taken this oath, if we *parents, or husbands and wives,* hear a friend, or brother; yea, perhaps a father, a husband, or a wife, let fall a word of &c.

dislike of the parliament, or assembly's proceedings in either kingdom; or that discovers another judgment, or opinion; or a word of passion unadvisedly uttered, and do not presently discover and complain of it, we pull upon ourselves the guilt or danger of perjury, which will be a mighty snare to thousands of well affected people.

To which I answer.

Ans. 1. The objection lays the case much more narrow than the words of the article, which distinguisheth the incendiary or malignant, which is to be discovered by a three-fold character, or note of malignity.

First, Hindering the reformation of religion.

Secondly, Dividing the king from his people, or one kingdom from another.

Thirdly, Making any faction or parties amongst the people, contrary to the league and covenant.

Now every dislike of some passage in parliament or assembly's proceedings; every dissent in judgment and opinion; every rash

word or censure, that may possibly be let fall through passion and inadvertency, will not amount to so high a degree of malignity as is here exprest, nor consequently bring one within the compass of this oath and covenant. A suitable and seasonable caution or conviction may suffice in such a case.

2. But suppose the malignity do arise to that height here exprest in any of the branches thereof; I do not conceive the first work this oath of God binds us to, is to make a judicial discovery thereof; while without all controversy our Saviour's * rule of dealing with our brethren in cases of offence, is not here excluded; which is,

1. To see what personal admonition will do; which toward a superior, as husband, parent, master, or the like, must be managed with all wisdom and reverence: If they hear us, we have made a good day's work of it; we have gained our brother; if not, then the rule directs us yet.

2. In the second place, to take with us two or three more; if they do the deed, thou mayest sit down with peace and thankfulness: If not,

3. If after all this, the party shall persist in destructive practices to hinder reformation, to divide the king from his people, or one kingdom from another; or lastly, to make factions or parties among the people; be it the man of thine house, the husband of thy

* Matth. xviii. 15.

youth, the wife of thy bosom, the son of thy loins, &c. 'Levi must know neither father nor mother, private relations must give way to public safety; thou must with all faithfulness endeavour the discovery; thine eye must not pity nor spare,' Deut. xiii. 6, 7, 8. It is a case long since stated by God himself; and when complaint is made to any person in authority, the plaintiff is discharged, and the matter rests upon the hands of authority. Provided notwithstanding, that there be in the use of all the former means, that latitude allowed, which the apostle gives in case of heresy; *scil.* 'A first and second admonition,' Titus iii. 10. This course not only the rule of our Saviour in general, but the very words of the covenant itself doth allow; for though the clause be placed in the sixth article, yet it hath reference to all, viz. 'What we are not able ourselves to suppress or overcome, we shall reveal and make known.' So that if the malignity fall within our own, or our friends ability to conquer, we have discharged our duty to God and the kingdoms, and may sit down with comfort in our bosoms.

That which remains in the other two articles, I cannot see how it affords any occasion of an objection; and the reference and tendency it hath to the reformation and preservation of religion, is easy and clear to any eye, that is not wilfully blind; the preservation of peace between the two kingdoms, in

the fifth article, being the pillar of religion; for how can religion and reformation stand, if any blind malignant Samson be suffered to pull down the pillars of peace and union? Besides it was a branch of that very covenant in the text, as well as of that in our hands. The children of Israel and Judah which had a long time been disunited, and in that disunion had many bloody and mortal skirmishes and battles, now at length by the good hand of God upon them, taking counsel to join themselves, first one to another, and then both unto God.

*Fifth article.
The preservation
between the
kingdoms.*

First, 'Let us join ourselves, and then to the Lord, in a perpetual covenant.' Surely, not only this copy in the text: but the worn-wood and the gall of our civil combustions and wars, which our souls may have in remembrance to our dying day, and be humbled within us, may powerfully persuade us to a cheerful engagement of ourselves, for the preservation of a firm peace and union between the kingdoms, to all posterity.

And lastly, as peace is the pillar of religion, so mutual assistance and defence of all

*Article sixth.
Mutual assist-
ance.*

those that enter into this league and covenant, in the maintaining and pursuance thereof, (mentioned in that sixth and last article) is the pillar of that peace, *divide et impera*; desert one another, and we expose ourselves to the lusts of our enemies.

And who can object against the securing

Indifferency, and of ourselves, and the state *neutrality.* gainst a detestable indifferency or neutrality, but they must *ipso facto*, proclaim to all the world, that they intend before hand to turn neutrals or apostates?

To conclude, therefore having thus examined the several articles of the covenant, and the material clauses in those articles; and finding them to be, if not of the same nature, yet of the same design with the preface and conclusion; the one whereof, as I told you, at the entrance, obligeth us to the reformation of religion; the other, of our lives, as serving to the immediate and necessary support and perfecting of these blessed and glorious ends and purposes, I shall need to apologise no further in the vindicating and asserting of this covenant before us: could we be so happy, as to bring hearts suitable to this service: could we set up such aims and ends as the covenant holds forth; the glory of God, the good of the kingdoms, and honour of the king, to which, this covenant, and every several thereof, doth humbly prostrate itself, article sixth, would all conspire to make us and our posterity after us, an happy and glorious people to all generations.

To them that object out of conscience, these poor resolutions may afford some relief, if not satisfaction; or, if these slender endeavours fall short of my design, and the reader's desires herein, I shall send them * to their labours,

* Mr. Henderson, and Mr. Nye's speech. Mr. Caryl, Mr. Coleman.

who have taken more able and fruitful pains in this subject. To them that object out of a spirit of bitterness and malignity, nothing will suffice; *quod vult, non quod est, audit semper qui decrevit errari*, Chrysost. He that is resolved to err, is satisfied with nothing but that which strengthens his error. And these I leave to such arguments and convictions, which the wisdom and justice of authority shall judge more proper; while I proceed to the second query propounded, The why?

I come now to the second query propounded, for the managing of this use of exhortation; *scil.* Why? Or upon what considerations we may be persuaded to undertake this service? To enter into this holy covenant.

And the first motive that may engage us hereunto, is the consideration, how exceedingly God hath been dishonoured among us, by all sorts of covenant-violation, as hath been formerly discovered at large; in the avenging whereof, the angel of the covenant stands, as once at the door of paradise, with a flaming sword in his hand, ready to cut us off, and cast us out of this garden of God; this good land where-
First motive.
God dishonoured by our former violations of covenant.

in he hath planted us thus long. I may say unto you therefore, concerning ourselves, as once Moses in another case, concerning Miriam, Numb. xii. 14. 'If her father had but spit in her face, should she not be ashamed?' &c. If our father had but spit in our face by some inferior correction, should we not be

ashamed? Ought we not to be greatly humbled before him? How much more, when 'he hath poured out upon us the fury of his wrath, and it hath burned us; and the strength of battle, and it hath set on fire round about?' Isa. xlii. 25. Should we not lay it to heart, and use all means to pacify the fierceness of his anger, lest it burn down to the very foundations of the land, and none be able to quench it?

Second motive, Yea, secondly, a wonderful *that such a means* mercy, and an high favour we *of recovery is yet* may count it from God, that *left us.*

yet such a sovereign means is left us for our recovery and reconciliation. Infinite condescension and goodness it is in our God, that after so many fearful provocations by our unhallowed and treacherous dealing in the covenant, he will vouchsafe, yet to have any thing to do with us, that he will yet trust or try us any more, by admitting us to renew our covenant with his Majesty, when he might in justice rather say unto us, as to the wicked, Psal. l. 16, 17. 'What have you to do, that you should take my covenant into your mouths, seeing you hate instruction, and cast my words behind you?' Certainly, had man broke with us, as oft as we have broke with God, we should never trust them any more, but account them as the off-scouring of mankind, the vilest, the basest that ever trod upon God's ground; and yet that after so many unworthy and treacherous departures from our God, after so much

unfaithfulness and perfidiousness in the covenant, (such as it is not in the capacity of one man to be guilty of towards another) that God should say to us, as once to his own people, Jer. iii. 1. 'Thou hast played the harlot with many lovers; yet return to me,' saith the Lord.' Oh, wonder of free grace! Oh, might this privilege be offered to the apostate angels, which kept not the covenant of their creation, nor consequently their first estate, and to the rest of the damned souls in hell! would God send an angel from heaven to preach unto them a second covenant, upon the laying hold whereon, and closing wherewith, they might be received into grace and favour; how would those poor damned spirits bestir themselves! what ratling of their red-hot chains! what shaking of their fiery locks! In a word, what an uproar of joy would there be in hell, upon such glad tidings! how many glorious churches, as Capernaum, Bethsaida, the seven churches of Asia, with others in latter times, have for their covenant-violation, been cast down from the top of heaven, where once you sat in the beauty and glory of the ordinances, to the very bottom of hell, a dark and doleful condition; and God hath never spoken such a word of comfort, nor made any such offer of recovery, and reconciliation unto them, as he hath done to us unto this day? 'Surely, he hath not dealt so with every people,' &c. Let it be our wisdom, and our thankfulness, to accept of it, with both hands; yea, both with hands and hearts. If God

give us hearts suitable to this price, that is in our hands, covenanting hearts, as he gives us yet leave and opportunity to renew our covenant, it will be to me a blessed security, that we are not yet a lost people; and a new argument of hope, that he intends to do England good. If neglected and despised, whether this may not be the last time that ever England shall hear from God, I much doubt, unless it be in such a voice as that is, Ezek. xxiv. 13. 'I would have healed Eng-
' land, and she will not be healed; because I
' would have purged thee, and thou art not
' purged, thou shalt not be purged from thy
' filthiness any more, till I have caused my
' fury to rest upon thee.' The Lord forbid such a thing: 'for, how shall we escape, if we
' neglect so great salvation?'

Third motive. *Thirdly,* We may be mightily encouraged to this service, in as much as it is prophesied of, as the great duty and privilege of gospel-times. You see the evangelical day, is one of those days, wherein this prophecy and promise must be fulfilled. And it is the same privilege and happiness which was prophesied of, under the type of the sticks made one, in the hand of the prophet Ezekiel, Ezek. xxxvii. 16. 22. For though in the literal sense, it be to be understood, as it is express, of the happy re-union of that unhappily divided seed of Jacob, Joseph and Ephraim, Israel and Judah; yet in a gospel sense, it is to be applied to the churches of

Jesus Christ, in the latter days, which tho' formerly divided and miserably torn by unnatural quarrels, and wars; yet Christ the king of the church, hath a day wherein he will make them one in his own hand: the great and gracious design which we humbly conceive Christ hath now upon these two nations, England and Scotland; even after all their sad divisions and civil discords to make them one in his right hand, to all generations. And this gives me assurance, that the work shall go on and prosper; yea, prosper gloriously, it having a stronger foundation to support it, than heaven and earth, for they are upheld but by a word of power, Heb. i. 3. But this work, which is called, the new heavens, and the new earth, is upheld by a word of promise; for 'we, according to his promise, look for new heavens, and a new earth, wherein dwells righteousness,' 2 Pet. iii. 13. I say, by a word of prophecy and promise, which it seems is stronger than God himself; for his word binds him, so that he can as soon deny himself, as deny his promise. There shall be therefore an undoubted accomplishment of these things, which are told us from the Lord, Luke i. 45. God will find, or make a people, who shall worship him in this holy ordinance; and upon whom, he will make good all the mercy and truth; all the peace and salvation which is bound up in it: only therefore let me caution and beseech you, not to be wanting to yourselves, and your own happiness: 'Judge not your-

‘ selves unworthy of such a privilege,’ Acts xiii. 46. nor ‘ reject the counsel of God against your own souls; sin not against your own mercies,’ Luke vii. 30. by withdrawing yourselves from this service, or rebelling against it. ‘ God will exclude none, that do not exclude themselves.’ Yea, further, this seems to speak an argument of hope, that the calling of the Jews, and the fulness of the Gentiles, is not far behind; in as much as God begins now to pour out this promise in the text, upon the churches, in a more eminent manner, than ever we, or our fathers saw it, in a gospel sense: and surely, gospel performance must make way for that full and universal accomplishment thereof, which shall unite ‘ Israel and Judah, Jew and Gentile, ‘ in one perpetual covenant unto the Lord, ‘ that shall never be forgotten.’ The gospel day is nothing else, but the dawning of that great universal day in the text, wherein God will make one glorious church of Jew and Gentile; the day-star whereof is now risen in our horizon: so that I am humbly confident, that the same shores shall not bound this covenant, which bound the two now covenanting nations; but as it is said of the gospel, so it will be verified of this gospel covenant. ‘ The sound thereof will go into ‘ all the earth, and the words of it to the ends ‘ of the world,’ Rom. x. 18. There is a spirit of prophecy that doth animate this covenant, which will make it swift and active; swift to run: ‘ His word runs very swiftly,’

Pfal. cxlvii. 15. And active, to work deliverance and safety, not only to these two kingdoms, but to all other Christian churches groaning under, or in danger of the yoke of Antichristian tyranny, whom God shall persuade to join in the same, or like association and covenant. So that me-thinks all that travel with the Psalmist's desire 'of seeing 'the good of God's chosen, and rejoicing in 'the gladness of his nation, and glorying 'with his inheritance,' Psal. cvi. 5. will certainly rejoice in this day, and in the goodness of God, which hath crowned it with the accomplishment of such a precious promise as here lies before us. While none can withdraw from, much less, oppose this service, but such as bear evil will to Zion, and would be unwilling to see the ruin and downfall of Antichrist, which this blessed covenant doth so evidently threaten.

Fourthly, This hath been the *Fourth motive.*
 practice of all the churches of *The example of*
 God, before, and since Christ; *the churches of*
 after their apostacies, and cap- *God, and*
 tivities for those apostacies and recoveries out
 of these captivities: the first thing they did,
 was to cement themselves to God, by a more
 close, entire and solemn covenant, than ever.
 Nehemiah, Ezra, Hezekiah, Jeremiah, Josi-
 ah, will all bring in clear evidences to wit-
 ness this practice. This, latter churches have
 learned of them, Germany, France, Scot-
 land, &c. But what shall I need to mention
 the churches, when as the God of the churches

took this course himself; who, when he pleases to become the God of any people or person, it is by covenant; as with Abraham, Gen. xvii. 2. 'Behold, I make a covenant 'with thee.' And whatever mercies he bestows upon them, it is by covenant. All the blessings of God's people, are covenant blessings: to wicked men, God gives with his left hand, out of the basket of common providence; but to his saints, he dispenseth with his right hand, out of the ark of the covenant. 'I will make an everlasting covenant 'with you, even the sure mercies of David,' Isa. lv. 3.

Yea, which is yet more to our purpose, when the first covenant proved not, but *Of the God of* carried, not by any fault that *the churches.* was in the covenant-maker, no, nor simply in the covenant itself; for, if man could have kept it, it would have given him life; I say, when it was broken, God makes a new covenant with his people. 'Not according to the covenant which I made with 'their fathers, which my covenant they 'brake,' &c. 'But this shall be the covenant,' &c. 'I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and 'will be their God, and they shall be my 'people,' &c. Jer. xxxi. 31. Heb. viii. 8. Because they could not keep the first covenant, God made a second that should keep them. Oh! that while we are making a covenant with our God, he would please to make such a covenant with us; so would it be in-

deed a 'perpetual covenant, that should not
'be forgotten.' Well, you see we have a
covenanting God, a covenant-making God,
and a covenant-renewing God; be we 'fol-
'lowers of God, as dear children:' let us be a
covenanting people, a covenant-making, a
covenant-renewing people; and as our God,
finding fault with the first; let us make a
'new covenant, even a perpetual covenant,
'that shall never be forgotten,' Heb. viii. 8.

A *fifth* motive to quicken us *Fifth motive, the*
to this duty, may be even the *practice of the*
practice of the Antichristian *pope and pre-*
state, and kingdom; popery *lates.*

hath been dexterous to propagate and spread
itself by this means. What else have been all
their fraternities and brotherhoods, and soci-
eties; but so many associations and combina-
tions politic, compacted and obliged by
oaths and covenants, for the advancing of
the Catholic cause, whereby nations and
kingdoms have been subdued to the obedi-
ence of the Roman mitre? And prelacy (that
whelp) hath learned this policy of its mother
papacy (that lioness) to corroborate and raise
itself to that height, we have seen and suffer-
ed by these artifices; while by close combi-
nations among themselves, and swearing to
their obedience, all the inferior priesthood,
and church-officers, by ordination-engage-
ments, and oaths of canonical obedience, &c.
a few have been able to impose their own
laws and canons, upon an whole kingdom;
yea, upon three kingdoms, it being an in-

considerable company, either of ministers or people (the Lord be merciful to us in this thing) that have had eyes to discover the mystery of iniquity, which these men have driven; and much more inconsiderable, that have had hearts to oppose and withstand their tyranny and usurpations. And why may not God make use of the same stratagem to ruin their kingdom, which they used to to build it? Yea, God hath seemed to do it already, while in that place where they cast that roaring canon, and formed their cursed oath, for the establishing their Babel prelacy, with its endless, &c. to perpetuity. In the * very same place hath this covenant been debated and voted, once, and a second time, by command of public authority, for the extirpation of it root and branch, and the casting of it out for ever, as a plant which 'our 'heavenly Father hath not planted.' And who knows, but this may be the arrow of the Lord's deliverance, which as it hath pierced to the very heart of prelacy; so it may also give a mortal wound to papacy itself, of which it will never be healed by the whole college of physicians, (the Jesuits) who study the complexion and health of that Babylonian harlot.

Sixth motive.
The blessed success of this ordinance in other churches.

In the sixth and last place, the good success this course hath found in the churches, may encourage us with much cheerfulness and confidence to

* King Henry VIIth's. chapel.

undertake this service. It hath upon it a *probatum est*, from all that ever conscienciously and religiously used this remedy. It recovered the state and church of the Jews, again and again, many a time, when it was ready to give up the ghost; it recovered and kept a good corespondency between God and them, all the time it was of any esteem and credit amongst them. It brings letters of testimonial with it, from all the reformed churches; especially from our neighbour nation and church of Scotland, where it hath done wonders in recovering that people, when all the physicians in Christendom had given them over. It is very remarkable, in Ezek. xx. 37. God promiseth to bring them 'into the bond of the covenant;' and in the next verse it follows, 'and I will purge out the rebels from among you.' There is an [and] that couples this duty, and this mercy together; 'I will bring you into the bond,' &c. 'And I will purge out,' &c. Truly God hath made good this promise to our neighbours; the waters of this covenant have been a notable purgation to the rebels there; it hath been a Shibboleth, to discover them, and a sword in the hand of the angel of the covenant, to chase or slay them. The mighty armies of malignants, whether inbred or foreign, though more in number, and greater in power; have not been able to stand before it, from the first day till now. The walls of Jericho have fallen flat before it. The dagon of the bishop's service-book, broke its neck

before this ark of the covenant. Prelacy and prerogative have bowed down, and given up the ghost at its feet: and what changes hath it wrought in the church and state! what a reformation hath followed at the heels of this glorious ordinance! and truly, even among us as poorly and lamely, and brokenly, as it hath been managed among us, I may say thus of it; it hath kept life and soul together; I am confident, we had given up the ghost before this time, had it not been for this water of life. Oh! what glorious success might we expect, if we did make such cheerful, such holy, such conscientious addresses, as becomes the law of so solemn an ordinance! truly, could I see such a willing people in this day of God's power, as are here in the text, encouraging and engaging one another, in an holy conspiracy. 'Come, let us join ourselves 'to the Lord, in a perpetual covenant,' &c. I have faith enough to promise and prophesy to you in the name of the Lord, and in the words of his servant Haggai, Hag. ii. 18, 19. 'From this very day, I will bless you.' And that you may know of what sovereignty this ordinance is; take notice of this for the close of this last motive, and this second query; that this is the last phyfic that ever the church shall take or need; it lies clear in the text; for it is an everlasting covenant; and therefore the last that ever shall be made. After the full and final accomplishment of this promise and duty, the church shall be of so excellent a complexion, that 'the inhabitant shall not

'say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein,
'shall be forgiven their iniquity,' Isa. xxxiii.
24. The Lord make it such phyſic to us for
Chriſt's ſake. And this ſhall ſuffice, &c.

S E R M O N III.

*On the Sabbath-day in the morning, being the
firſt of October; immediately before taking of
the COVENANT, in Milk-Street Church.*

I COME now to the third query, *Third query,*
how? And this inquiry di- *how?*
vides itſelf into two branches.

ſcil. How to { Acceptation?
 { Perpetuity?

For the ſatisfying of both which, I will
fetch as much as may be out of the text, that
ſo you may yet further behold what propor-
tion there is between the duty there, and that
which lies before us this day.

In the firſt place, we muſt in- *Anſw. firſt, in*
quire how this duty may be ſo *general. With*
managed, that God may accept *an ordinance*
of us in the doing of it? How *frame of heart.*
to acceptation?

Now in the general, we muſt know, that
this ſervice being an ordinance of God, it
muſt be undertaken and managed with an
ordinance frame of heart, *i. e.* according to
the laws and rules of divine worſhip; and by
how much the more ſacred and ſolemn this

Numb. III.

E e

ordinance is, by so much the more ought we to call up, and provoke the choicest, and heavenliest of those affections and dispositions of spirit, wherewith we make our addressments to the holy things of God.

In special. In particular these.

First, in judgment.

First, We are to come upon this service, with the most ponderous advisedness, and most serious deliberation of judgment, that may be. It is one of those grand qualifications which God himself calls for to an oath. 'Thou shalt swear in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness,' Jer. iv. 2. In truth for the matter, and that we have already examined in the former sermon in righteousness, in reference to the keeping of the oath, (of which hereafter) and in judgment, in respect of the taking or making of the oath, the thing which we are now about, that we should well consider what we do. And indeed, if at any time, and in any undertaking, that advice be useful, Prov. iv. 26. 'Ponder the path of thy feet.' Eccl. v. 1. 'And keep thy foot when thou enterest into the house of God;' then certainly it is most seasonable, when a people or person draw near to make or renew their covenant with the most high God. And it seems, in the latter of those two scriptures now quoted, Eccles. v. 1. the Holy Ghost doth principally refer to this duty of making vows and covenants with God; the second verse doth intimate such a business, 'Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thy heart be hasty to

‘utter any thing before God.’ To utter what? The fourth verse is exprefs, ‘when thou makeft a vow unto God,’ &c. So that it is clear, the purpose of the Holy Ghost in that place is, as in all our holy fervices; fo especially in this of vows, to caution all the people of God, when they draw near to utter their vows unto the Lord, to manage it with the greateft deliberation, and folidnefs of judgment that is poffible; to fit down and confider with ourfelves before hand, with whom we have to deal? What we have to do? Upon what warrant? By what rule? To what end? ‘The lame and the blind,’ God’s foul hates for a facrifice, Mal. i. 8. The lame affections, and the blind ignorant judgment. And well he may; for certainly, they that do not swear in judgment, will not, cannot swear in righteoufnefs; they that do not make their vows in judgment, will not, cannot pay, or perform them in righteoufnefs. He that swears he knows not what, will obferve he cares not how. Incogitant making, will end in unconfcionable breaking of covenant; and if need be, in a cursed abjuration of it; for rash swearing, is a precipice to forswearing. And therefore, if any of you have not well weighed this fervice, or be any ways unfatisfied, in whole, or in parts, I advife you to forbear, till your judgments be better informed. ‘Whatsoever is not of faith, is fin,’ Rom. xiv. 23. Provided, that this be not done merely in a pretence to evade and elude this fervice, to which God and the two

nations call you, as here in the text. 'Come, let us join,' &c. Take heed of casting a mist of willing prejudice, and affected ignorance, before your own eyes; such the apostle speaks of, 2 Pet. iii. 5. to no other purpose, but that your own malignity may steal away in that mist undiscovered; for be sure, your sin will find you out. An ingenious ignorance, and truly conscientious tenderness, is accompanied with an ingenuous and conscientious use of all means, for information and satisfaction; and to such, I make no question, the ministers of Christ will be ready to communicate what light they have, for resolving doubts, removing scruples, and satisfying conscience, whensoever you shall make your addresses for that purpose. In the mean time, if there be any, that under pretence of unsatisfiedness do shun the duty and information too; they will be found, but to mock God, and authority; to whose justice and wisdom therefore I must leave them. God tells his people, when he joins himself to them, 'I will marry thee to myself, in righteousness, and judgment,' Hos. ii. 19. How in judgment? Because God considers what he does, when he takes a people or person to himself; not that God chuseth for any wealth or worth in the creature, faith foreseen, or works foreseen; but that finding it (on the contrary) poor and beggarly, and undone, and foreseeing what it is like to prove, crooked and froward, unteachable and untractable; he sits down to speak after the

manner of men, and considers, what course to take, and what it is like to cost him, to make them such a people, as he may delight in, and then consulting with his treasures, and finding he hath wherewithal to bear their charges, and to bring about his own ends; he resolves to take them, and marry them to himself, whatsoever it cost him. The result of such a consultation you may read, dropt from God's own pen, 'And I said, how shall I put thee among the children, and give thee a pleasant land, a goodly heritage, the hosts of nations?' Jer. iii. 19. Here is God's wise deliberation on the matter: 'how shall I put thee?' &c. That is, how shall I do this? But I must do it to mine own dishonour; for I see before-hand what thou wilt prove; thou wilt be the same that ever thou wast; as idolatrous, as adulterous, as unstable, as backsliding as ever, &c. It is not a pleasant land, a goodly heritage, that will make thee better. Well, after some pause, God was resolved what to do: and I said, hear his resolution, 'Thou shalt call me, my father, and shalt not turn away from me:' that is, as if he had said, I will take this course with thee, I will first give thee the heart of a child, 'thou shalt call me father;' and then I will give thee the inheritance of a child, 'a goodly heritage,' &c. And when I have done; I will not leave thee to thyself, but I will knit thee to myself, by an indissoluble union. 'I will put my Spirit into thee,' &c. 'And thou shalt not turn away from me,'

Isa. lix. 21. There is God's wise resolution; he resolves to do all himself, and then he is sure it will not fail his expectation; he undertakes it. 'Thou shalt call me, my father, and shalt not turn away from me.' Thus God, when he marrieth his people to himself, doth it in judgment. Now therefore, 'be ye followers of God, as dear children,' Eph. v. 1. And since you come now about the counter-part of the same work; namely, to join or marry yourselves to God, do it in judgment. Consider well what you do; and among other things, since you are so poor, and nothing in yourselves, as you have seen in the opening of this precious scripture, Jer. iii. 9. Bethink yourselves, where you will have strength and sufficiency, to make good this great and solemn engagement with your God. But of this more hereafter.

The second qualification.

I proceed to the second qualification or direction.

Holy fear.

Secondly, See that you come to this service with a reverential frame of spirit, with that holy fear and awe, upon your hearts, as becomes the greatness and holiness of that God, and that ordinance, with whom you have to do; remembering that you are this day to swear before God, by God, to God: either of which, singly considered, might justly make us fear and tremble; how much more may this threefold cord bow, and bind our hearts down in an humble, and holy prostration? It is said of Jacob, Gen. xxxi. 53. 'He swore by the fear of his father

‘Isaac.’ Jacob in his oath chuseth this title of fear, to give unto God, to shew with what fear he came; but to swear by this God, what should we do; when, as I say, we come to swear by him, and to him? Surely, when he is so especially the object of our oath, he should then especially be the object of our fear. The consideration of that infinite distance between God and us, may wonderfully advantage us towards the getting of our hearts into this holy posture. Great is that distance, that is between a king and a beggar; and yet, there is but creature and creature; greater is that distance, between heaven and earth; and yet these, but creature and creature; and yet, greater is the distance between an angel and a worm; and yet still, there is but creature and creature. But now the distance that is between God and us, is infinitely wider; for behold, there is the ‘Mighty, Almighty Creator, before whom all the nations are but as a drop of a bucket, and the small dust of the balance,’ Isa. xl. 15. And the poor nothing creature, ‘vanity, and altogether lighter than vanity,’ Psal. lxii. 9. And yet, this is not all; yea, this is the shortest measure of that distance, whereof we speak; the distance of Creator and the creature; lo, it is found between God and the angels in heaven, and the ‘spirits of just men made perfect;’ in respect whereof, the Psalmist saith of God, Psal. cxiii. 6. ‘He humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven.’ It is a conde-

scension for that infinitely glorious being, who dwells in himself, and is abundantly satisfied in the beholding of his own incomprehensible excellencies, to vouchsafe to look out of himself, and behold the things that are in heaven; the best of those glorious inhabitants that stand round about his throne; who therefore, conscious of that infinite distance wherein they stand, make their addressees with the greatest self-abasements, 'covering their faces, and casting themselves down' upon those heavenly pavements, Rev. iv. 8, 9, 10, 11. But behold upon us, poor wretches, that dwell here below, in these houses of clay, there is found that which widens this distance beyond all expression or apprehension; sin sets us farther beneath a worm, than a worm is beneath an angel. I had almost said (bear with the expression, I use it, because no other expression can reach it) sin sets us as much beneath our creatureship, as our creatureship sets us beneath the Creator. Surely, there is more of God to be seen in the worst of a creature, than there is of a creature to be seen in the best of sin; there is nothing vile and base enough under heaven, to make a simile of sin.

And now therefore, if it be such a condescension for the great God to behold the things that are in heaven; how infinite condescension is it, to behold the sinful things that are on earth! and if sinless saints, and spotless angels, do tender their services, which yet are as spotless as their persons, with such re-

verential deportment; what abhorrency, and self-annihilation, can be sufficient to accompany our approaches to this God of holiness, in such high and holy engagements, in whom, when God looks out of himself, he can behold nothing besides our creatureship, of our own, but that which his soul hates! Heb. xii. 28, 29. 'Let us therefore have grace, whereby 'we may serve God acceptably,' in this so excellent an ordinance, 'with reverence and 'godly fear; for our God is a consuming 'fire.' The acceptable serving of God, is with reverence and godly fear. The Lord teach us to bring fear, that so we may find acceptance.

Again, in the third place, to *The third qualification.* that end, labour to approve *Since-* yourselves to God in this ser- *rity.*

vice, in the uprightness and sincerity of your hearts. The want of this, God lays oft to the charge of the Israelites, as in other duties, so especially in this, which is now before us, 'They lied to him with their tongues: 'for their heart was not right with him; 'neither were they stedfast in his covenant,' Psal. lxxviii. 36, 37. And this stood between them and their acceptance: God tells the prophet Ezekiel as much; 'Son of man, 'these men have set up their idols in their 'hearts, and put the stumbling-block of their 'iniquity before their face; should I be inquired of at all by them? Ezek. xiv. 3. They come with their hearts full of their lusts; so many lusts, so many idols; and for

this God refuseth to be inquired of by them: 'should I be inquired of? Is as much as, 'I will not be inquired of,' &c. It is a denial with disdain; 'should I?' Or if they be so impudent to inquire, he will not answer; or if he give them an answer, it shall be a cold one; he will give them their answer at the door; better none; 'I will answer them according to the multitude of their idols,' verse 4. and 7. *i. e.* according to the merit of their idolatry: they bring the matter of their own damnation with them, * and they shall carry away nothing else from me, but the answer or obsignation of that damnation. Oh! it is a dangerous thing, to bring the love of any sin with us to the ordinances of God; 'If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear my prayer,' Psal. lxvi. 18. And so may we say to our own souls; if I regard iniquity, the Lord will not accept my person, he will not regard my covenant. If God see any thing lie nearer our hearts than himself, he will scorn us, and our services. If therefore you would be accepted, 'out with your idols;' cast out the love of sin, out of your hearts; Gen. xxxv. 2, and be upright with your God in this holy undertaking. It is the main qualification in the text; 'they shall inquire the way to Zion, 'with their faces thitherward,' *i. e.* in sincerity, with uprightness of spirit, with the full set and bent of their souls: as it is said of

* Calvin. *Super hunc locum. Afferant materiam suam damnationis, &c.*

Christ, when he went to his passion, 'he
'stedfastly set his face to go up to Jerusalem,'
Luke ix. 51. He went with all his heart to
be crucified; with a strong bent of spirit. Be-
loved, we are not going to 'crucifying work,'
(unless it be to crucify the flesh with the af-
fections and lusts) 'but to marriage-work;
'to join ourselves to the Lord, in an ever-
'lasting covenant,' &c. Let us do it 'with
'our faces Zion-ward;' yea, let us stedfastly set
our faces reformation-ward and heaven-ward,
and God-ward, and Christ-ward, with whom
we enter covenant this day. A man may in-
quire the way to Zion, with his face toward
Babylon; a people or person may enter cove-
nant with God, with their hearts Rome-ward,
and earth-ward, and sin-ward, and hell-ward.
Friends, look to your hearts. 'Peradven-
'ture, said Jacob, my father will feel me,
'and I shall seem to him as one that mocks,
'and I shall bring a curse upon me, and not
'a blessing,' Gen. xxvii. 12. Without all
peradventure, may we say, our father will
feel us; for he searcheth all hearts, and un-
derstandeth the imaginations of the thoughts.
If we be found as they that mock, shewing
much love with our mouths, while our
hearts are far from him, we shall bring a
curse upon ourselves; yea, and upon the
kingdoms also, and not a blessing. It is re-
ported to the honour of Judah, in the day of
their covenanting with their God; 'they had
'sworn with all their heart, and with their
'whole desire,' 2 Chron. xv. 15. And their

success was answerable to their sincerity; for so it follows, 'And the Lord was found of them, and gave them rest round about.' Oh! that this might be our honour and happiness in this day, of our lifting up our hands to the most high God, that God might not see in us a double heart, an heart, and an heart as the Hebrew expresses it, *i. e.* one heart for God, and another for our idols; one heart for Christ, and another for Antichrist, &c. but he might see us a single, upright hearted people, without base mixtures and composition; for he loves truth, *i. e.* sincerity, in the inward parts; that he finding such sincerity as he looks for, we also might find such success as we look for; safety and deliverance to both the nations; yea, that both in respect of our sincerity and success, that might be made good upon us, that is spoken to the eternal honour of that good king Hezekiah, 2 Chron. xxxi. last. 'And in every work that he began in the service of the house of God, and in the law, and in the commandments to seek his God, he did it with all his heart, and prospered.' Universal sincerity is accompanied with universal prosperity; in all he did, he was upright, and in all he did, he prospered. Brethren, whatever you want, be sure you want not sincerity; let God see you fully set in your hearts, to take all from sin, and to give all to Jesus Christ; me-thinks I hear God saying unto us, 'according to your uprightness, so be it unto you.'

In the fourth place, if you *The fourth qualification, or direction, make God* would be accepted by God in this holy service, labour to make God your end. It is your pattern in the text, 'they shall go and seek the Lord;' it was not now 'howling upon their beds for corn and wine,' as formerly; of which God says, 'they cried not unto me,' Hosea vii. 14. *i. e.* they did not make God the end of their prayers; as elsewhere God tells them. 'When ye fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh month, even those seventy years, did ye fast to me, even unto me?' Zech. vii. 5. In seventy years, they kept seven score fasts in Babylon; and yet amongst them all, they kept not one day unto God; for though the duty looked upon God, they that did the duty, did not look upon God; that is, they did not set up God, as their chief end, in fasting and praying: they mourned not so much for their sin, as for their captivity; or, if for their sin, they mourned for it not so much as God's dishonour, as the cause of their captivity; they were not troubled so much, that they had by their sins walked contrary to God, as that God by his judgments 'had walked contrary to them,' Lev. xxvi. 40. They fasted and prayed, rather to get off their chains than to get off their sins; to get rid of the bondage of the Babylonians, than to get rid of the servitude of their own base lusts. But now, blessed be God, it was otherwise: 'the children of Israel shall come, they and the
Numb. IV. F f

'children of Judah together;' to what end
 'They shall seek the Lord,' *i. e.* they shall
 seek God for himself, and not only for them-
 selves; 'going and weeping;' why? Not so
 much, that he hath offended them, as that
 they have offended him; for their sins, more
 than for their punishments; so it is more di-
 stinctly reported, Jer. iii. 21. 'A voice was
 heard upon the high places, weeping and
 supplications of the children of Israel; be-
 cause they have perverted their way, and
 have forsaken the Lord their God.' They
 had forgotten God before, not only in their
 sins, but in their duties; 'they cried not to
 me; they fasted not to me; not at all unto
 me,' &c. But now they remember the Lord
 their God; they seek his face; they labour to
 atone him; yea, they seek him to be their
 Lord, as well as their Saviour; to govern them,
 as well as to deliver them; 'they ask the way
 to Zion;' they require as well, and more,
 how they should serve him, as that he should
 save them. 'The Lord is our judge, the Lord
 is our law-giver, the Lord is our king, he
 he will save us,' Isa. xxxiii. 22. Beloved
 Christians, let us write after this copy, and
 in this great business we have in hand, let us
 seek God, and seek him, as a fountain of ho-
 linefs, as well as a fountain of happiness.
 Take we heed of those base, low, dung-hill
 ends, which prevailed upon the Shechemites
 to enter into covenant with the God of the
 Hebrews, 'shall not their cattle and substance
 be ours?' Let the two nations, and every

soul in both the nations, that lift up the hand to the most high God, in this holy league and covenant, take heed of, and abhor such unworthy thoughts, if they should be crowding in upon this service, and say unto them, as once Christ to Peter, 'get thee behind me, Satan; thou favourest not of the things that be of God, but of the things that be of men.' You may remember how it fared with Hamor, and his son Shechem, and their people, to whom they propounded these base ends. God did not only disappoint them of their ends, but destroy them for them; their aims were to get the Hebrews substance and cattle, but they lost their own, with their lives to boot; 'For it came to pass on the third day, when they were fore, two of the sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, came upon the city boldly, and slew all the males,' &c. 'And the sons of Jacob came upon the slain, and spoiled the city; they took their sheep, and their oxen, and all their wealth, Gen. xxxiv. 25, 27, 28, 29. A most horrid and bloody treachery and cruelty in them, Gen. xlix. 5, 6, 7. which stands as a brand of infamy upon their foreheads to this day; but a most just and righteous censure from God, and a caution to all succeeding generations, of prostituting heavenly and holy ordinances, to earthly and sensual ends. Oh! let it be our 'admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come, to the end, that we may not tempt God, as they also tempted, 1 Cor. x. 9, 11. For if God so much abhorred, and so severely pun-

ished these worldly respects in the men of the world; if God was so angry with poor poor blind heathen, who had no other light for their guide, but the glimmering light of nature; how will his anger not only kindle, but flame in the avenging of such baseness upon Christians, a people of his own, who have the glorious light of the gospel of Jesus Christ, to discover to them higher and heavenly ends and references? So that such a kingdom people, or person, that should dare to bring such base carnal ends, to so spiritual and divine contract, should be made a monument of the wrath and vengeance of divine justice; and while they propound to themselves safety, riches, or greatness, from such an excellent ordinance, God makes it by a strange, but righteous hand, an occasion of misery and ruin to them, and their posterity, to many generations.

Christians, labour to set up God in this day and duty, wherein you engage yourselves nigh unto him; and if you would have heavenly blessings, see that you propound and pursue heavenly ends and aims; lest, while you come to make a covenant with God, you commit idolatry against him. Whatsoever we make our ultimate and highest end, we make our God: If therefore you cannot make God your sole, your only end; yet be sure you make him your choicest, your chiefest end; keep God in his own place; and let all self-respects whatsoever vail to his glory, according to that general rule, 'whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God,' 1 Cor. x. 31.

Fifthly, To do this business to *Fifthly, with*
 acceptance, we must do it cheer- *cheerfulness,*
 fully: as God loves a cheerful giver; so he
 loves a cheerful hearer, a cheerful petitioner,
 and a cheerful covenanter; and you have it
 in the text too, 'come let us;' there is their
 readiness and cheerfulness to the work; as it
 was that for which the apostle doth commend
 his Macedonians in another service, 2 Cor.
 ix. 7. 'This they did, not as we hoped, but
 'first gave themselves to the Lord,' 2 Cor.
 viii. 5. So these, they give themselves to God
 of their own accord, 'come let us.' Oh! that
 the ministers of the gospel might have occa-
 sion to make the same boast of you, concern-
 ing this solemn ordinance before you, that
 they might say and rejoice, that you were a
 people, 'that gave yourselves to the Lord,'
 and unto the work of reformation, not by a
 parliamentary fear, or by our ministerial com-
 pulsions; but above our hopes, and beyond
 our expectations; of your own accord. See
 what a wonder, not only of cheerfulness, but
 of joy and triumph, is recorded of the Jews
 in king Aśa's time, in their taking of the co-
 venant, 2 Chron. xv. 14, 15. 'They sware
 'unto the Lord with a loud voice, and with
 'shouting, and with trumpets, and with cor-
 'nets. And all Judah rejoiced at the oath;
 'for they had sworn with all their hearts,'
 &c. There was indeed a severe mulct, a capi-
 tal censure enacted, against those that should
 refuse, and reject this ordinance. Verse 13.
 'They should be put to death, whether great

‘or small, whether man or woman.’ A very grievous censure; but it seems their was neither need, nor use of it; ‘for all Judah rejoiced at the oath;’ the people looked upon this service, not as their pressure, but as their privilege; and therefore came to it, not with contendness only, but an holy triumph, and so saved the magistrate and themselves the labour and charges, of executing that sentence on delinquents. Oh! that this may be your wisdom and honour; that whatever penalty the honourable parliaments of either nation, shall in their wisdom think fit to proportion to the grievous sin of rebelling against this covenant of the Lord; (and it seems by the instance before, that whatsoever penalty they shall ordain less than death, will not be justice only, but moderation) I say, whatever it shall be, it may be rendered useles and invalid by the forwardness and rejoicings of an obedient people. That all England, as well as Scotland, would rejoice at the oath, and swear with all their hearts, &c. For certainly it will not be so much our duty as our prerogative, as I have shewed you before, to enter into covenant with God and his people. It is the day of God’s power: the Lord make you a ‘willing people,’ Psal. cx. 3. And as a testimony of this willingness and joy, imitate the people here in the text, and stir up one another, and provoke one another to this holy service. ‘Let us join ourselves to the Lord,’ &c. They express their charity, as well as their joy; they would not go to Zion alone,

they call as many as they meet, with them; 'come let us join ourselves to the Lord.' Oh, that this might be your temper! It is the very character of the evangelical church; both as Isaiah, and Micah have described it; their words be the same. 'Many people shall go and say, come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord,' Isa. ii. 3. Micah iv. 2. Oh! that while neutrals and malignants do discourage one another, and set off one another, and imbitter one anothers spirits; God and his ministers might find you encouraging each other, and provoking one another, and labouring to oil one anothers spirits, to this (as other) gospel duty and prerogative; God could not chuse, but be much pleased with such a sight.

I might have made this a distinct qualification, but for brevity sake, I couch it under this head. I come to the last.

If you would be accepted bring faith with you to this service: and that in a fourfold reference,

*Sixth and last qualification.
Faith in reference.*

To {
God.
The ordinance.
Ourselves.
Jesus Christ.

First, In reference unto God; 1. *To God.* 'for he that will come to God,' in any ordinance, 'must believe that God is and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him,' Heb. xi. 6. There is nothing God takes better at his peoples hand, than when they come with their hearts as full of good

thoughts of God, as ever they can hold; such as, 'Lo, this is our God, we have waited for him, and he will save us; we have waited for him, we will be glad, and rejoice in his salvation, Isa. xxv. 9. 'He will save, we will be glad,' *i. e.* God will undoubtedly give us occasion of gladness and triumph in his praises. Oh, sweet and blessed confidence of divine goodness! how well doth this become the children of such a father, who hath stiled himself the Father of mercies? Good thoughts of God, do mightily please, and even engage God to shew mercy to his people. 'Let us therefore come with boldness to the throne of grace;' even in this ordinance also, 'that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help us in this time of our need,' Heb. iv. 16.

2. *To the ordinance.*

Secondly, Let us bring faith in reference to the duty; as we are to believe well of God, so we are to believe well of the duty, that it is an ordinance wherein God will be sanctified, and found of them that seek him. It is not enough, that we seek him in his ordinance, but that we believe it to be his ordinance, Rom. xiv. 23. 'Whatever is not of faith, is sin;' he speaks not of a faith, that doth justify the person; but of a faith, that doth justify the performance; that is, a thorough conviction of conscience, that the work, whatsoever it is, is such as the word will bear me out in it, such as God himself doth approve. To do doubtfully, is to do sinfully; an ignorant person cannot please God.

Thirdly, Bring faith in reference to your own persons; believe that God will accept of them in this ordinance; whatever your success shall be in regard of the kingdom, yet you shall find acceptance in regard of your persons: so the church, Isa. lxiv. 5. 'Thou meetest him that rejoiceth, and worketh righteousness, those that remember thee in thy ways.' When a people or person can say, as the church in another place, Isa. xxvi. 8. 'In the way of thy judgments, have we waited for thee, O Lord; the desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee.' God will not stay till they come unto him, but he will meet them half-way; 'thou meetest him,' &c. like the father of the prodigal, while they are yet half-way, he will see, and run, and meet, and fall upon their neck; and while they weep at his feet, tears of contrition; he will weep over their necks, the tears of compassion: Oh! stir up yourselves, and engage your faith to believe, and expect a gracious entertainment. If God see you coming in the integrity and uprightness of your hearts, to enter into covenant with God, to take him as your God, and to give up yourselves to be his people, to take away all from sin, and to give all to Jesus Christ; he will certainly take it well at your hands, and say unto you, 'come, my people, and welcome; I will be your God, and you shall be my people;' which that you may not miss of.

In the fourth place, come believingly, in reference to Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ; be sure you bring a Christ with you; for 'he hath made us accepted in the 'beloved,' Eph. i. 6. Come without a Christ, and go without acceptance.

The day of atonement among the Jews, was called *dies cippurim*, the day of expiation; and the word *cippurim*, is derived from an Hebrew root, that signifies to cover; and so the day of atonement, was as much as to say, 'the day of covering; the covering of nakedness,' as Rev. iii. 18. 'and the covering of sin,' as Psal. xxxii. 1. 'Blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven, and whose sin is covered:' In which every name of the day, the ground or reason is held forth, why it was called a day of atonement, *scil.* because it was a day of covering; wherein Christ was typified, who is the 'the covering of the saints; the long white robes of his righteousness,' covering both their persons and performances; so that the nakedness of neither doth appear in the eyes of his father; 'he hath beheld no iniquity in Jacob, neither hath seen perverseness in Israel,' Num. xxiii. 21. Why? Not because there was no 'iniquity in Jacob, or perverseness in Israel,' for there was hardly any thing else; but because their iniquity and perverseness was hid from his eyes, being covered with the mantle of his son's righteousness, the Messiah, which he had promised, and they so much looked for. Let us therefore in this service, as in all, 'put on the Lord Jesus,' Rom. xiii. 14. That as Jacob in the garments of his elder

brother Esau, so we in the garments of our elder brother Jesus, may find acceptance and obtain the blessing.

And thus much be spoken concerning the first branch of this third query, how to acceptance?

I come now to the second *How to perpetuity?* branch of it, and that is, how to perpetuity? Or, how may we perform this service, so that it may be 'an everlasting covenant, that may never be forgotten?

To that end, take these few *Directions.* brief directions, and I have done. 1. *Get soul affliction for former covenant-violations.* First, Labour to come to this service with much soul-affliction, for former violation

of the covenant, either in refusing, or profaning, or breaking thereof: the foundations must be laid low, where we would build for many generations. In what deep sorrows had you need to lay the foundations of this covenant, which you would have stand to eternity, that it may be 'an everlasting covenant,' &c. This you have in the text; 'they shall seek the Lord going and weeping;' weeping in the sense of their former rebellions and apostacies, whereby they forfeited their faith, and brake their covenant with the Lord their God; and it was no ordinary slight business they made of it. 'A voice was heard upon the high places, weeping and supplication,' &c. Jer. iii. 21. They were not a few silent tears: no, they 'lift up their voices and wept,' as was said of Esau, &c. They

cried so loud, that they were heard a great way off. 'A voice was heard upon the mountains;' and it was as bitter, as it was loud; 'a great mourning, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Meggiddon,' Zech. xii. 11, 12. when all Judah, Jerusalem, Jeremiah the prophet, and all the singers, bewailed the death of their good king Josiah, with a grievous lamentation, 'and made it an ordinance forever,' &c. 2 Chron. xxxv. 24, 25. Oh! that as we have their service in hand, so we had their heads and their hearts, to manage it with rivers of tears, for our former vileness: that we could weep this day together, and afterward a part, as it is prophesied, Zech. xii. 13. 'Every family apart, and our wives apart;' yea, and every soul apart, that we have dealt so evilly with so good a God, so unfaithfully with so faithful a God; that we could put our mouths in the dust, and smite upon our thigh, and be ashamed and confounded, for all the wickedness we have committed against God and his covenant, in any, or all these ways. Such a posture God will see us in, before he will shew us 'the way to Zion;' before he will reveal to us the model and plat-form of reformation; for so was his charge to Ezekiel, Ezek. xliii. 11. 'If they be ashamed of all that they have done, shew them the forms of the house, and the fashion thereof, and the goings out thereof, and the comings in thereof, and all the forms thereof, and all the ordinances thereof, and all the forms

thereof, and all the laws thereof, and write it in their sight,' &c. Surely, this blessed prophecy hath an eye upon our times, for this is one of those days, as I told you before, wherein God will make good these gracious words unto his people; and God hath called together his Ezekiels, his ministers, to 'shew the house,' *i. e.* the form and pattern of the evangelical house or church, unto the house of England and Scotland; 'Shew the house to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed,' verse 10. That is, shew them the outside thereof, shew them, 'that there is such a house,' which they never yet beheld with their eyes, that they may be humbled and ashamed of their former idolatries, &c. And thus do our Ezekiels tell us, there is a way of gospel government, of such beauty and excellency, as our eyes never yet beheld, nor the eyes of our forefathers; to the end, that we may be ashamed of all our former idolatries and superstitions, our monstrous mixtures of popery and will-worship in the ordinances of Christ; and that we have not sooner inquired after the mind of Christ, how he will be worshipped in his house: but now, unless we be ashamed, *i. e.* deeply and thoroughly humbled, for all that we have done unworthy of Christ and his worship, and the covenant of our God; we shall never see the inside, that is, the laws and the ordinances, and the forms of this house, which are both various and curious; for so the variety and repetition of the words imply. The prophets are not to

reveal these unto us, unless we be ashamed; God will either withdraw them from us, or which is worse, withdraw himself from them; so that our eyes shall never behold the Lord in the beauty of holiness; we shall not be admitted to see the beauty and glory of such a reformation, as our souls long for. And as God will see us in this posture, before he reveal to us the model and platform of reformation; so also, till we be in such a posture of deep humiliation, for our former abominations, we shall never be stedfast and faithful in the covenant of God. Till our hearts be thoroughly broken for covenant-breach, we will not pass much for breaking covenant, upon every fresh temptation. Yea, till that time we be humbled, not for a day only, and so forth: but unless we labour to maintain an habitual frame of godly sorrow upon our hearts; for our covenant-violations, shall we ever be to purpose conscientious of our covenant? A sad remembrance of old sins, is a special means to prevent new. When every solemn remembrance of former vileness, can fetch tears from our eyes, and blood from our hearts, and fill our faces with an holy shame, the soul will be holily shy of the like abominations, and of all occasions and tendencies thereunto. ‘Remembering mine affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the gall. My soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled within me,’ Lam. iii. 19, 20. When old sins cost dear, new sins will not find an easy entertainment. When old sins are new afflictions, when the re-

membrance of them is as wormwood and gall, the soul will not easily be bewitched to drink a new draught of that poisoned cup any more. Christian, believe me, or thou mayst find it by experience too true, when thou hast forgot old sins, or canst remember them without new affliction of soul, thou art near a fall; look to thyself, and cry to God, for preventing grace. There will be great hopes we shall be faithful in our new covenant, when we come with a goodly sense and sorrow for our abuse of old, and labour to maintain it upon our spirits.

But so much for the first direction; I come to the second.

Secondly, If you would have *2. Direction.* this covenant to be a perpetual *See old scores* covenant, labour to see *cross.*

scores cross; do not only mourn for thy covenant-unfaithfulness; but labour to get thy pardon written and sealed to thee in the blood of the covenant. There is virtue enough in the blood of the covenant, to expiate the guilt of thy sins against the covenant. 'I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean; from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you,' Ezek. xxxvi. 25. Their sins of idolatry, were sins especially against their covenant; idolatry being the violation of the marriage-knot, between God and a people; yet even from them doth God promise to cleanse them, upon their repentance and conversion. The blood of the covenant, compared to water, for the cleansing virtue thereof, should cleanse them

from their covenant defilements. 'The blood
 ' of Jesus Christ, cleanseth us from all sin,'
 1 John i. 7. 'Thou hast played the harlot
 ' with many lovers; yet, return again to me,
 ' saith the Lord,' Jer. iii. 1. It is a mighty
 encouragement to renew our covenants with
 God, that he is so ready to pardon the breach
 of old; and the sense of this pardon is a
 mighty engagement, and strengthening, to
 keep our new covenants. Oh! for God to say
 to a poor soul, 'be of good cheer, thy sins
 ' be forgiven thee,' Matth. ix. 2. 'And I
 ' have blotted out thy sins as a cloud, and
 ' thy transgressions as a thick cloud,' Isa.
 xlv. 22. Jer. xxxi. 18. All thy unkindnesses,
 and unfaithfulnesses, thy treacherous dealings
 against the covenant, &c. shall be forgotten;
 they shall do thee no harm, &c. This will
 mightily strengthen the hands, and fortify the
 heart, and even make it impenetrable and
 impregnable against all the sollicitations, and
 importunities of old temptations: see a nota-
 ble instance of this, Hos. xiv. 4. 'I will heal
 ' their backslidings, I will love them freely;
 ' for mine anger is turned away from him.
 Verse 5. 'I will be as the dew to Israel,' &c.
 Verse 6. 'His branches shall spread,' &c.
 Verse 7. 'They that dwell under his shadow
 ' shall return,' &c. What follows these gra-
 cious promises? Why, Ephraim shall say,
 'What have I to do any more with idols?
 He that before was so inseparably joined to
 idols, that he could not be divorced from them.
 'Ephraim is joined to idols,' Chap. iv. 17.
 Jer. xxxi. 18. All the blows that God gave

him, tho' God should have beaten him to pieces, as he himself afterward confessed, could not beat him off from his idols; insomuch, that God at length gave him over, as an hopeless child. 'Ephraim is joined to idols, let him alone.' Yet no sooner doth this Ephraim hear of a pardon, and of the love of God to him; but the bonds between him and his idols are dissolved, and away he thrusts them with indignation; Ephraim shall say, 'what have I to do with idols?' Or as the prophet Isaiah expresseth it, Isa. xxx. 22. 'Ye shall defile the covering of the graven images of silver, and the ornament of thy molten images of gold; thou shalt cast them away as a menstruous cloth, thou shalt say unto it, get thee hence.' And thus it is with a people, or a person, when once 'God sheds abroad his law in their hearts,' Rom. v. 5. and makes them 'hear joy and gladness,' Psal. li. 8. in speaking, or sealing, a pardon upon their souls; they that before were joined to their idols, drunkenness, uncleanness, covetousness, pride, ways of false worship, old superstitious customs, and ceremonies, and the like; so that there was no parting of them; or those who had long been grappling and conflicting with their strong corruptions, and old temptations, and in those conflicts had received many a foil, and got many a fall to the wounding of their consciences, and cutting deep gashes upon their souls; now they stand up with a kind of omnipotence among them, no temptation is able to stand before them; they say to their

idols, whether sinful company, or sinful customs, 'get ye hence, and what have I to do any more with idols?' What have I to do with such and such base company? What have I to do with such base filthy lusts? 'I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine.' Christ is mine, and I am his. The reason of it is, because pardon begets love; 'she loved much,' 'because much was forgiven her,' Luke vii. 47. And love begets strength: 'for love is as strong as death,' Cant. viii. 6. Yea, stronger than sin or death; 'They loved not their lives to the death,' Rev. xii. 11. 'And I count not my life dear,' says Paul, Acts xx. 24. When once the man had tasted of the free grace of God in the pardon of his sins, 'who before was a blasphemer, and a persecuter, and injurious,' 1 Tim. i. 13. He could find in his heart, not only to lay down a lust, but to lay down his life too for Jesus Christ: 'for whose sake, (saith he,) I have suffered the loss of all things; and I count not my life dear, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received from the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God,' Acts xx. 24.

My beloved Christians, if you would be faithful in the covenant of God, into which you are now entering, sue out your pardon for what is past; yea, intreat the Lord, not only to give a pardon, but to speak a pardon, and seal a pardon upon your hearts; and never give the Lord rest, till the Lord have given rest to your souls. 'The joy of the Lord is your strength,' Neh. viii. 10.

Thirdly, If you would make *3. Direction.*
 an unchangeable covenant, *Self-distrust.*
 with an unchangeable God, come furnished
 with and maintain upon your hearts, an abundant measure of self-distrust; labour to be
 thoroughly convinced of your own nothingness
 and disability. ‘By his own strength shall no
 ‘man prevail,’ 1 Sam. ii. 9. Surely, thine
 own treachery may inform thee, and thine
 own backslidings may convince thee, to confess
 with Jeremiah, Jer. x. 23. ‘O Lord, I
 ‘know (I know it by sad experince) the way
 ‘of man is not in himself: It is not in man
 ‘that walketh to direct his steps.’ * *Staupitius*
confest to Luther, that he thought in his
 very conscience he had above a thousand
 times renewed his covenant with God, and
 as many times broken it: a sad confession,
 and yet how many among us may take up
 the like lamentation! be convinced of it, I beseech
 you, and maintain the sense of this
 conviction upon your spirits. Say oft within
 yourself, I am nothing, worse than nothing.
 This treacherous heart of mine, will betray
 me into the breach of my covenant, if the
 Lord leave me to myself, I shall one day fall
 by the hand of my corruptions. He that walks
 tremblingly, walks safely.

In the next place, be often *4. Direction.*
 renewing your resolutions. It *Oft renew your*
 was the exhortation of that *resolutions.*
 good man to the new converts at Antioch,
 where they were first called Christians, ‘that

* *Ego plus quam millies devovi.*

‘ they should cleave unto the Lord with full ‘ purpose of heart,’ Acts xi. 23. This covenant, I have shewed you, as the ordinance whereby you cleave unto the Lord, the joining ordinance. Oh! do it with full purpose of heart, and be often putting on fresh and frequent resolutions, not to suffer every base temptation of Satan, every deceitful, or malignant solicitation of the world; every foolish and carnal suggestion of the flesh, to bribe and seduce you from that fidelity which you swear this day to Jesus Christ and the kingdoms. A well grounded resolution is half the work, and the better half too; for he that hath well resolved, hath conquered his will; and he that hath conquered his will, hath overcome the greatest difficulty: no such difficulty in spiritual things, as to prevail with ones own heart. With these cords therefore, of well bottomed resolutions, be oft binding yourselves to your covenant, as once Ulysses did himself to his mast, that you may not be bewitched by any Syrenian song of the flesh, world, or the devil, to violate your holy covenant, and drown yourselves in a sea of perdition. And to that end, it would not be altogether useless, to fix your covenant in some place of your houses, or bed-chamber, where it may be oftenest in your eyes, to admonish you of your religious and solemn engagements, under which you have brought your own souls. The Jews had their ‘ phylacteries, or ‘ borders upon their garments,’ Numb. xv. 38. which they did wear also upon their heads, and upon their arms; which tho’ they abused

afterward, not only to pride, making them broader than their first size or pattern, in ostentation and boasting of their holiness, which our Saviour condemns in the scribes and pharisees, Matth. xxiii. 5. And to superstition, for they used them as superstitious helps in prayer, which they coloured under a false derivation of the word in the Hebrew*; yet God indulged them in this ceremony, as an help for their memories, to put them in remembrance to keep the law of the Lord. And God himself seems to use this art of memory, as it were, when comforting his people, he tells them, 'behold I have engraven thee upon the palms of my hands, and thy walls are continually before me,' Isa. xlix. 16.

I must confess, the nature of man is very prone to abuse and pervert such natural helps to idolatry and superstition. This instance of the Jews, wretchedly improving their phylacteries to superstitious purposes, their idolizing of the brazen serpent; and thereby of a cure, turning of it into a plague, a snare; with the like, are sufficient testimonies. And we see how the papists have abused and adulterated the lawful use of natural mediums, to the unlawful use of artificial mediums of their own inventions; images and crucifixes, first to help their memories, and stir up their devotions in their prayers, and then to pray unto them, as mediums of divine worship. The more cautious had Christians need be in the

* Deriving the Hebrew word Tephallajim from Pillel, which signifies to pray; whereas it is derived truly from the word Taphal, which signifies to affix or join.

use of those mediums, which either God hath ordained by special command for the help of our memories, and stirring up of our graces, as the visible elements in the sacraments; or such natural advantages, which moral equity allows us for the help of our understandings and memories in spiritual concerns; such is this, we are now speaking of; it being the same, with the use of books and tables, &c. Tertullian tells us of a superstitious custom among the ancient Christians, that they were wont to set up images over their doors and chimneys, to keep witches when they came into their houses from bewitching their children; and so by a little kind of witchcraft, prevented witchcraft. But surely, to set up this covenant, where we might often see and read, what engagements we have laid upon our souls, (and I could heartily wish Christians would do it at least once a week) it will be an innocent and warrantable spell, to render the witchery of the flesh, world, and devil, fruitless and ineffectual upon our spirits, while the soul may say with David, Psal. lvi. 12. 'Thy vows are upon me, O God: I will 'render praise unto thee.'

Fifth means.
Prayer.

But fifthly, consider often and seriously, who it is that must uphold your resolutions; even he that upholds heaven and earth: no less power will do it; 'for you are kept by the 'power of God through faith unto salvation,' 1 Pet. i. 5. It is God that first gives the resolution, and then must uphold, and bring it into act; 'It is God that worketh in you, both

‘to will and to do of his good pleasure,’ Philip. ii. 13. And therefore labour I beseech you to do these two things.

First, Put all your resolutions into 1. *Pray*. the hands of prayer: David was a man of an excellent spirit, full of holy resolves. ‘I will walk in mine integrity,’ Psal. xxvi. 11. ‘And I will keep thy testimonies,’ Psal. cxix. 8. And again, ‘I have sworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments,’ Psal. cxix. 106. And yet again, ‘do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee?’ &c. ‘I hate them with a perfect hatred,’ Psal. cxxxix. 21, 22. A thousand such sweet resolutions doth that precious servant of God breath out all along the Psalms; and yet so jealous the holy man is of himself, that he never trusts himself with his own resolutions; and therefore shall you find him always clapping a petition upon a resolution, as in the quoted places. ‘I will walk in mine integrity. Redeem me, and be merciful unto me. I will keep thy testimonies, oh! forsake me not utterly, *q. d.* Though thou hast let me fall fearfully, suffer me not to fall finally.’ And so when he had said, ‘I have sworn, and will not repent,’ &c. He presently adds, (within a word or to) ‘quicken me, O Lord, according to thy word,’ verse 108. And again, ‘accept, I beseech thee, the free-will offerings of my mouth, O Lord, and teach me thy judgments,’ verse 108. God must teach him, as to make, so to make good the free-will offerings of his mouth, *i. e.* his promises and vows. And so when he had

made that appeal to God, 'do not I hate
' them that hate thee, Lord?' &c. *Ut sup*:
he presently betakes himself to his prayers,
'search me, O God, and know my heart;
' try me, and know my thoughts. And see if
' there be any wicked way in me, and lead
' me in the way everlasting,' Psal. cxxxix. 23,
24. Mark, I pray, 'search me, try me, know
' my heart, know my thoughts, see whether
' there be any wicked way, lead me, &c.
He will neither trust himself, for what he is,
nor for what he shall be; 'try me,' he dares
not trust his own trial: 'lead me,' he dares
not trust his own resolutions: such a sweet,
holy jealousy of himself doth he breath forth,
with all his heavenly purposes and resolu-
tions. Oh! all you that would make an ever-
lasting covenant with God, imitate holy Da-
vid, upon every holy resolution, clap an ear-
nest petition, say, "I will reform my life;
oh! redeem me, and be merciful unto me. I
will set up Christ in my heart, I will labour
to walk worthy of him in my life: oh! for-
sake me not utterly, Lord; leave me not to
myself, I have sworn, and am utterly purpos-
ed in all my duties I owe to God and man,
to amend my life, and to go before others in
the example of a real reformation, &c. O
Lord, teach me thy judgments: quicken me,
O Lord, according to thy word. Thy vows
are upon me, that I will according to my
place and calling, endeavour to preserve re-
formation in Scotland, to procure reforma-
tion in England; that I will in like manner
endeavour the extirpation of popery and

prelacy, &c. To preserve the rights and liberties of parliaments, &c. Discover incendiaries; endeavour the preservation of peace between the two kingdoms; defend all those that enter into this league and covenant, that I will never make defection to the contrary part, or to give myself to a detestable indifferency or neutrality, &c. And this covenant I have made in the presence of Almighty God, the searcher of all hearts, with a true intention to perform the same, as I shall answer at that great day. But now add with David, 'Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts, and see if there be any way of wickedness in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.'

In a word, put your covenant into frequently renewed resolutions: resolutions into prayer, and prayer, and all into the hands of God: It is God that must gird thee with strength, to perform all thy vows. This the close of this blessed covenant, into which we enter this day, doth teach us. "Humbly beseeching the Lord to strengthen us by his Spirit; for this end, and to bless our desires and proceedings," &c. And the covenant in the text, was surely inlaid with prayer, while they engage themselves to seek the Lord, *scil.* not only to shew them the way to Zion, but to give them strength to walk in that way.

Let it be your wisdom and piety, my brethren, to imitate both; oh pray, and be much in prayer, and be often in prayer: pray daily over the covenant; as you this day lift up

Numb. IV.

H h

your hands to swear to the most high God in this covenant, so lift up your hands every day to pray to that God for grace to keep this covenant. Let sense of self-insufficiency, keep open the sluice of prayer, that that may let fresh streams of strength, every day into your souls, to make good your vows; when you be careless to pray over the covenant, you will be careless to keep the covenant; when you cease to pray, you will cease to pay: If you will be watchful in praying over your vows, prayer will make you watchful in paying your vows: If you will be faithful in crying to God, God will be faithful in hearing and helping, Psal. l. 15. Pray therefore, pray over every good purpose and resolution of heart towards the covenant of God, which conscience shall suggest, or the Spirit of God shall breath into your bosoms, at this present or any time hereafter; as David once prayed over that good frame of spirit, which he observed in his people; what time they offered so willingly and liberally to the preparing for the house of God; ‘O Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Jacob our fathers, keep this for ever, in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart, and prepare their heart unto thee,’ 1 Chron. xxix. 18. To every command, God is pleased to add a promise; so that what is a command in one place, is a promise in another, *Ex. gr.* ‘Circumcise the foreskin of your heart,’ it is a command in Deut. x. 16. But in the xxx. chap. verse 6. there it is a promise, ‘The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart,

‘and the heart of thy seed to love the Lord.’ Again, ‘make you a new heart,’ Ezek. xviii. 31. So saith the word of command: ‘a new heart will I give you:’ so speaks the word of promise, chap. xxxvi. 26. Once more, ‘little children abide in him,’ that is the command, 1 John ii. 28. Which in the immediate verse before is a gracious promise, ‘you shall abide in him.’ Divers more such instances I could give you; and why thus? Surely, the command teacheth us our duty, the promise our weakness, and insufficiency to perform that duty. The command finds us work; the promise finds us strength: the command is to keep us from being idle; the promise to keep us from being discouraged, &c. Well, let us imitate God, and as he couples a command and a promise, so let us couple a resolution and a petition. As God seconds and backs his command with his promise, so let us second and back our promises with our prayers; the one in sense of our duty, the other in sense of our weakness; by the one, to bring our hearts up to God; by the other, to bring God down to our hearts: resolve and petition, promise and pray, and the Lord ‘prepare your heart to pray, and cause his ear to hear,’ Psal. x. 17.

Secondly, Since God only must uphold your desires, walk continually, as in his presence; stability is only to be found in the presence of God; so far we live an unchangeable life, as we walk and live in the presence of an unchangeable God. The saints in heaven know no vi-

2 Walk in God's presence.

cistitudes, or changes in their holy frame and
 temper of spirit, because they are perfected in
 the beholding of his face; 'with whom is no
 'variableness, nor shadow of changing:' and
 so far as the saints on earth can keep God in
 their presence; so far the presence of God will
 keep them. 'I have set the Lord always before
 'me; and because he is at my right hand;
 'therefore I shall not be moved,' Psal. xvi. 8.
 sung David of himself literally, and in the
 person of Christ typically: the privilege was
 made good to both, so far as either made good
 the duty. David, according to his degree, and
 proportion of grace, set God before him, plac-
 ed him on his right hand; and so long as he
 could keep God's presence, the presence of
 God kept him; it kept him from sin, 'I have
 'kept myself from mine iniquity,' Psal. xviii.
 23. How so? Why, 'I was upright before
 'him,' in the former part of the same verse.
 So long as he walked before God, in God's
 presence; so long he walked upright, and
 kept himself from his iniquity; or rather God's
 presence kept him: and as it kept him from
 sin, so it kept him from fear also; 'tho' I walk
 'through the valley of the shadow of death,
 'I will not fear,' Psal. xxiii. 4. Mark what
 he saith, though he walk, not step; and walk
 through, nor step cross; and through, not a
 dark entry, or a church-yard in the night-
 time, but a valley, a large, long, vast place;
 how many miles long I know not; and this
 not a valley of darkness only, but of death,
 where he should see nothing but visions of

death, and not bare death, but the shadow of death: the shadow is the dark part of the thing; so that the shadow of death, is the darkest side of death; death in its most hideous and horrid representations; and yet behold, when he comes out at the farther end, and a man would have thought to have found him all in a cold sweat, his hair standing upright, his eyes set in his head, and the man beside himself, &c. Behold, I say, he doth not so much as change colour, his hand shakes not, his heart fails not; as he went in, he comes out; and though he should go back again the same way, he tells you, 'I will not fear.' How comes this to pass? How comes the man to be so undaunted? Why, he will tell you in the very same verse, speaking to God 'For thou art with me.' God's presence kept him from fear, in the midst of death and horror. Thus it was I say, with David, while he could keep God in his presence, he was unmoveable, impregnable; you might as soon have stirred a rock, as stirred him, 'I shall not be moved.' Indeed so long as he was upon the rock, he was as unmoveable as the rock itself; but alas! sometime he lost the sight of his God, and then he was like other men; 'Thou didst hide thy face from me, and I was troubled,' Psal. xxx. 7. When God hid his face from him, or he hid his eyes from God; then how easily is he moved? Fear breaks in, 'I shall one day fall by the hand of Saul,' 1 Sam. xxvii. 1. Sin breaks in, yea, one sin upon the heels of another; the adulterous act, upon the adulte-

rous look, and murder upon adultery, as you know in that sad business of Uriah the Hittite; once off from his Rock, and he is as weak as dust, not able to stand before the least temptation of sin or fear; and therefore, as soon as he comes to himself again, he cries, 'Oh! lead me to the Rock that is higher than I;' to my Rock, Lord, to my Rock, Psal. lxi. 2. But now, the Lord Jesus, the antitype of David here in this Psalm, because he made good this, (duty shall I call it?) 'For in him dwelt the fulness of the God-head bodily,' Col. ii. 9. To him therefore was this privilege made good perfectly in the highest degree; for tho' he had temptations that never man had, and was to do that which never man did; and to suffer that which never man suffered; the contradiction of sinners; the rage of hell; and the wrath of God: yet, because he set the Lord always at his right hand; yea, indeed was always at the right hand of God; therefore he was not moved, but overcame even by suffering.

Beloved, you see where stability in covenant is to be had; even in the presence of God. Labour I beseech you, to walk in his presence, and to set him always at your right hand; behold, it shall keep you, so that you shall not be moved; or if you be moved, you shall not be removed; if you stumble, you shall not fall; or if you fall, you shall not fall away; you shall rise again. There is a double advantage in it.

First, It will keep your hearts in awe; he that sets God in his presence, dares not sin in

his presence: 'God sees,' will make the heart say, 'How shall I do this great evil, and sin against God?'

Secondly, There is joy in it; 'In thy presence is fulness of joy,' Psal. xvi. 11. It is true, in its proportion of grace, as well as of glory; and joy will strengthen and stablish, as I shewed you before, 'The joy of the Lord is your strength.' As long as the child is in its father's eye, and the father in its eye, it is secure. 'Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the Most High; thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee,' &c. Psal. xci. 9, 10. It will hold as well in the evils of sin, as in the evils of punishment: well, the Lord make you know these precious truths in an experimental manner. I have held you too long; but the business requires it. Remember I beseech you, it is God that must uphold your desires and resolutions; and therefore,

1. Be much in prayer. And
2. Set yourselves in the presence of God. He lives unchangeably, that lives in the unchangeable God.

In the sixth and last place, if *Sixth and last* thou wouldst make an everlasting covenant with God, that *direction. Look up to Christ.* shall never be forgotten, look up to Jesus Christ, go to Jesus Christ, he must help, and he must strengthen, and he must keep thee, or else thou wilt never be able to 'keep thy covenant;' hear him else. 'Without me ye can do nothing,' John xv. 5. And as

Christ speaks thus on the negative; so you may hear the apostle speaking by blessed experience on the affirmative; 'I can do all things through Jesus Christ, who strengtheneth me,' Philip. iv. 13. Observe I pray, 'Without me ye can do nothing. Through Christ I can do all things.' Nothing, all things. There is a good deal of difference between two men; take one without Christ, and be his parts never so excellent, his resolutions never so strong, his engagements never so sacred, 'he can do nothing,' unless it be to 'break his covenant and vows,' as Samson brake his cords like threads scorched with the fire; and take the other with a Christ standing by him, and be he in himself never so weak and mean, unlearned and ungifted, lo, as if he were clothed with omnipotency, 'he can do all things;' he can subdue such corruptions, conquer such temptations, perform such duties, and in such a manner, do such things, suffer such things, (and in all these keep his covenant with God) as to other men, and to himself before, were so many impossibilities: he could not before, now he can. Nothing before, all things now. All things fit for an unglorified saint to do; all things God expects from him; all things in a gospel sense; all things comparatively to other men, and to himself, when he was another man: see, I beseech you, how without a Christ, and thro' a Christ, makes one man differ from another; yea, and from himself, as much as can and cannot; all things and nothing; impotency and omnipotency, 'Without me ye can do

'nothing. Thro' Christ I can do all things.' If therefore you would make a covenant with eternity to eternity; study Christ more than ever, labour to 'know nothing but Jesus Christ, and 'him crucified.' And therein thesetwothings.

1. Interest in Christ.

2. Influence from Christ.

First, Labour to get interest in Christ. Interest is the ground of influence; union the fountain or spring of communion; so Christ, 'as the branch 'cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in 'the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in 'me,' John xv. 4. There you have the truth, and the simile of it; no fruit from Christ, without being and abiding in Christ; there is truth: illustrated and proved by the vine and the branch; there the simile, which is prosecuted and enlarged by our Saviour, in the 5, 6, 7, verses.

1. Go to Christ for interest.

And as all communion ariseth from union, so look what the union is, such is the communion; Christ was filled with the fulness of God because united to God; the saints receive of the fulness of Christ, because united to Christ, John i. 16. 'I in them, and thou in me,' chap. xvii. 23. Only here is the difference. Christ's union with his Father was personal, infinite, and substantial, Col. ii. 9. and therefore the communications were answerable, 'For God 'gave not the Spirit by measure unto him,' Ec. John iii. 34. But the saints union with Christ, being of an inferior nature; their communications also are proportionable; yet such

as serve poor creatures to all blessed saving purposes. And therefore with Paul, Phil. iii. 9. Labour to 'be found in Christ,' that so you may know experimentally the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings. All the power and virtue that is in Jesus Christ, it is only for them that are in him, as the branch in the root, as the members in the body.

Christ the covenant of God.

Christ is called the covenant of God, Isa. xlix. 8. 'I will give thee for a covenant of the people, *i. e.* As Calvin well expounds it, *sponsor fæderis*, the surety or undertaker of the covenant, of that second new covenant, between God and his people, not the Jews only, but the Gentiles also. A surety on both sides: the surety of God's covenant to them; 'For all the promises of God are in him, yea, and in him, Amen,' 2 Cor. i. 20. *i. e.* he sees them all made good to the heirs of promise. And Christ again is the surety of their covenant unto God; for he undertakes to make good all their covenant, and vows, and promises unto God. 'Those that thou gavest me, I have kept,' saith Christ, John xvii. 12. 'And I live (saith Paul,) yet not I, but Christ liveth in me,' Gal. ii. 20.

So that it is Christ who makes the covenant good on both sides, as God's to his people, so his people's to God; and so it follows in that place of Isaiah, 'I have given thee for a covenant to the people, to establish the earth;' establishment must come from Christ, the un-

undertaker, the surety of the covenant; as he paid the debt for the time past, so he must see the articles of the covenant kept for the time to come. For want of such an undertaker or surety, the first covenant miscarried: It was between God and the creature, without a mediator; and so the creature changing, the covenant was dissolved; but the second, God meant should not miscarry, and therefore puts it into sure hands; 'I have laid help upon one that is mighty,' speaking of Christ, Psal. lxxxix. 19. And 'I will give thee for a covenant to the people:' God hath furnished Christ wherewithal, to be a surety; to make good his covenant to his people, and their covenant to him.

But now he hath this stock of all-sufficiency for none but these that are his members, he actually undertakes for none but those that are actually in him; 'These that thou hast given me, I have kept.' He keeps none but them whom the Father hath given him; given him so, as to be in them, and they in him. 'I in them,' so John xvii. 23. and 'they in me,' so chap. xv. 5. Well, if thou wouldst be unchangeable in thy covenant, get interest in Christ who is the covenant; the unchangeable covenant; 'The Amen, the faithful and true witness,' Rev. iii. 14. 'Yesterday and to-day, and the same for ever,' Heb. xiii. 8. Get interest, 'count all things loss and dung, that thou mayst win Christ, and be found in Christ,' Philip. iii. 8. Yea, do not only labour to get interest, but prove thy interest. Take not up a matter of so infinite concern-

ment upon trust: all that thou doest covenant to God, and that God doth covenant to thee, depends upon it; and therefore, 'work it out with fear and trembling, and give all diligence to make it sure unto thy soul:' Philip. ii. 22. 2 Pet. ii. 10. Study evidences, and be content with none but such as will bear weight in the 'balance of the sanctuary;' such as the word will secure; such as to which the word will bear witness, that they are inconsistent with any Christless man, or woman, whatsoever; and pray with unweariable supplications that God will not only give thee interest, but clear thy interest, and seal up interest upon thy soul and thee, to the day of redemption.

Go to Christ for influence.

And then secondly, study influence, when once in Christ, then hast thou right and liberty to draw virtue from Christ, for behold, all the fulness that dwells in Christ is thine; all that life, and strength, and grace, and redemption, that is held forth in the promise, it is all laid up in Christ, as in a magazine; and by virtue of thy interest in, and union with the Lord Jesus, it is all become thine. Hence you hear the believing soul making her boast of Christ, as before, for righteousness, so also for strength. 'In the Lord have I righteousness and strength,' Isa. xlv. 24. As righteousness for acceptance, so strength also for performance of such duties, as God in his covenant doth require and expect at the believers hands: I have no strength of mine own, but in Christ I have enough; 'In the Lord have righteousness and strength.' Christ is the

lord-keeper, or lord high steward, or lord treasurer; to receive in and lay out, * for and to all that are in covenant with the Father. And this is one main branch of God's covenant with the Redeemer, that he gives out to the heirs of promise, wherewithal to 'keep 'their covenant with God;' so that they never depart from him. Isa. lix. 21. 'As for me, 'this is my covenant with them, saith the 'Lord, my Spirit that is upon thee, and my 'words which I have put in thy mouth, shall 'not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the 'mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of 'thy seeds seed, saith the Lord, from hence- 'forth and for ever.' They be the words of God the Father to the Redeemer, concerning all his spiritual seed; 'the Redeemer shall come 'to Zion,' ver. 20. And that Spirit, and these words of life and grace, which were upon the Redeemer must be propagated to all his believing seed; by virtue whereof, their covenant with God, shall in its proportion be like God's covenant with them (for indeed the one is but the counterpart of the other) unchangeable, everlasting. Jer. xxxii. 40. 'I will make 'an everlasting covenant with them, that I 'will not turn away from them to do them 'good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, 'and they shall not depart away from me.'

Now therefore, my brethren, since there is enough in Christ, study how to draw it out: indeed it will require a great deal of holy skill

* Psal. lxxviii. 18. He received. Eph. iv. 8. He gave gifts, &c.

to do it; it requires wisdom to draw out the excellencies of a man: Prov. xx. 5. 'Counsel 'in the heart of a man is deep, but a man of 'understanding will draw it out.' It is a fine art to be able to pierce a man, that is like a vessel full of wine, and set him a running; but to draw out influence and virtue from the Lord Jesus is one of the most secret hidden mysteries in the life of a Christian: indeed we may complain, 'the well is deep, and we have nothing 'to draw withal,' John iv. 11. But labour to get your bucket of faith, that you may be able to 'draw water out of this well of salvation,' Isa. xii. 3. Labour by vital acts of a powerful faith; set on work in meditation and prayer, to draw virtue and influence from Jesus Christ; the mouth of prayer, and the breathings of faith from an heart sockt and steeped in holy meditations, applied to Jesus Christ, will certainly (tho' perhaps insensibly) draw virtue from him. Behold, faith drew virtue from Christ by a touch of his garments; shall it not much more draw out that rich and precious influence, by applying of him in the promises, and in his offices unto our souls? Consider, Oh Christian, whoever thou art, even thou that art in Christ, consider, God hath not trusted thee with grace enough before hand, for one month, no, not for a week, a day; nay, thou hast not grace enough before hand for the performance of the next duty, or the conquering of the next temptation; nor for the expediting thyself out of the next difficulty; and why so? But that thou mayst learn to live

by continual dependance upon Jesus Christ, as Paul did, 'The life that I now live in the flesh, I live it by the faith of the Son of God,' Gal. ii. 20. Paul lived by fresh influence drawn from Christ by faith, every day and hour; study that life, it is very mysterious, but exceeding precious. Had we our stock before hand, we should quickly spend all, and prove bankrupts: God hath laid up all our treasure of 'wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption in Jesus Christ,' 1 Cor. i. 30. and will have us live from hand to mouth, that so we might be safe, and God's free grace be exalted: 'It is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end your promise might be sure to all the seed,' Rom. iv. 16. Wherefore holy brethren, partakers of this heavenly calling, look up to Jesus Christ, who is the covenant of his Father, and your covenant; lo, he calls you. Isa. lxxv. 22. 'Look unto me, and be ye saved all the ends of the earth.' Surely they are worthy to perish, who will not bestow a look upon salvation: oh look humbly, and look believingly, and look continually; look for interest, look for influence, look for righteousness, look for strength; and let Jesus Christ be all in all to thy soul: thou wilt never be any thing, nor do any thing in Christianity, till thou comest to live in and upon Jesus Christ, and him only: humbly entreat the Lord, and give him no rest, that he will make a covenant with thee in Christ, which shall keep thee, and then thou wilt be able to keep thy covenant: look

up to Christ for covenant grace, to keep covenant-engagement, and so shalt thou do this service in a gospel-sense, to acceptance, to perpetuity.

I have now done with these three queries; What? Why? How?

How to { Acceptation?
Perpetuity?

I know much more might be added, but the work to which we are to address ourselves, will take up much time; the Lord set home what hath been spoken.

Only give me leave to tell you thus much in a word, for the close of all; as this covenant prospers with us, so we are like to prosper under it; the welfare of the kingdom and of thy soul, is bound up now in this covenant: for I remember what God speaks of the kingdom of Israel, brought into covenant now with the king of Babylon, to serve him, and to be his vassals; that 'by keeping covenant it should stand,' Ezek. xvii. 14. And the breaking of that covenant was the breaking of Zedekiah and his whole family and kingdom, verse 16, 17. Now was covenant-breach, or fidelity the foundation of stability or ruin to that kingdom, which was struck, but with a dying man; how much more is the rise and fall of this kingdom; yea, of these two kingdoms, bound up in the observation or forfeiture of this covenant, which we make this day with the living God? You that wish well to the kingdoms, that would not see the downfall and ruin thereof, be more conscientious of

your covenant, than ever heretofore; for surely, upon the success of this covenant we stand or fall; as we deal with the covenant, God will deal with us; if we slight the covenant, God will slight us; if we have mean thoughts of the covenant, God will have mean thoughts of us; if we forget the covenant, God will forget us; if we break the covenant, we may look that God shall break these two nations, and break us all to pieces; if we reject it, God will reject us; if we regard our covenant, God will regard his covenant, and regard us too; if we remember the covenant, God will remember his, and remember us; if we keep the covenant, the covenant will keep us, and our posterity for ever.

Oh that this consideration might be a motive to whet on that exhortation of the apostle; 'Let him that stole, steal no more,' Eph. iv. 28. and so let him that was drunk, be drunk no more; he that was unclean, let him be unclean no more; they that were worldly, proud, secure, careless of receiving Christ in their hearts, and of walking worthy of him in their lives, be so no more; he that hath been malignant or neutral, let him be so no more: for I protest against every man, that after the striking of this so solemn and sacred a covenant with the most high God, shall dare knowingly and willingly to persist in any one of these mentioned abominations, or any other; he is an enemy to Jesus Christ, a traitor to the kingdoms, a state-murderer, and a destroyer of himself, and his posterity; and at his hands, if they miscarry,

God will require the blood of all these: but there are a people of whom, and to whom, I hear God speaking gracious words. 'Surely 'they are my people, children that will not 'lie,' Isa. lxiii. 8. My people, mine by covenant; I have brought them into the bond of the covenant; I have made my covenant with them, and they have made their covenant with me: and they be children that will not lie; I know they will deal no more as a lying and treacherous generation with me, but will be a faithful people in their covenant; and I will be a faithful God unto them; 'I will be 'their Saviour, they will serve me, and I will 'save them.'

Now the Lord make us such a people unto him, children that will not lie, and he be such a God to us; he be our Saviour, a Saviour to both kingdoms, and every soul that makes this covenant; to save us from sin, and to save us from destruction; to save us from our enemies without, and to save us from our enemies within; to save us from the devil, and to save us from the world, and to save us from ourselves; to save us from the lusts of men, and to save us from our own lusts; to save us, and to save our posterity; to save us from Rome, and save us from hell; to save us from wrath present, and from wrath to come; to save us here, and to save us hereafter; to save us to himself in grace, and to save us with himself in glory, to all eternity, for Christ's sake, Amen, and Amen.

JANUARY 30. 1643-4.

THE ordinance of the lords and commons, authorizing the commissioners of the great seal of England, to call before them all officers, ministers, and other attendants on the great seal, or court of chancery, king's-bench, common-pleas, exchequer and courtwards and liveries, and to tender unto every of them, the solemn league and covenant, for reformation, and for making void as well the places and offices of such as shall refuse, or neglect to take the same; as also for restraining of all lawyers, attorneys, clerks or solicitors, to practice or solicit in any of the said courts, before they shall have taken the said solemn league and covenant. See the acts of the parliament of England.

An Ordinance of the Lords and Commons, injoining the taking of the late Solemn League and Covenant throughout the Kingdom of ENGLAND, and dominion of WALES, Feb. 2d, 1643--4.

WHEREAS a covenant for the preservation and reformation of religion, the maintenance and defence of laws and liberties, hath been thought a fit and excellent means, to acquire the favour of Almighty God towards the three kingdoms of England, Scotland and Ireland; and likewise to unite them, and by uniting, to strengthen and fortify them against the common enemy of the

true reformed religion, peace and prosperity of these kingdoms: and whereas both houses of parliament in England, the cities of London and Westminster, and the kingdom of Scotland, have already taken the same; it is now ordered and ordained by the lords and commons in parliament, that the same covenant be solemnly taken, in all places throughout the kingdom of England, and dominion of Wales. And for the better and more orderly taking thereof, these directions ensuing, are appointed and enjoined strictly to be followed.

Instructions for the taking of the Solemn League and Covenant throughout the Kingdom.

1. **T**HAT the speakers of both houses of parliament do speedily send, to the lord general, and all other commanders in chief, and governors of towns, forts, castles, and garrisons; as also to the earl of Warwick, lord high admiral of England, true copies of the said solemn league and covenant, to the end it may be taken by all officers and soldiers under their several commands.

2. That all the knights and burgessees now in parliament, do take special care, speedily to send down into their several counties (which are, or shall hereafter be under the power of the parliament) a competent number of true copies of the said league and covenant, unto the committees of parliament, in their several counties; and that the said committees do within six days at the most disperse the said

copies to every parish-church or chapel in their severall counties, to be delivered unto the ministers, church-wardens, or constables of the severall parishes.

3. That the said committees be required to return a certificate of the day when they received the said copies, as also the day they sent them forth, and to what parishes they have sent them; which certificate they are to return to the clerk of the parliament, appointed for the common's house, that so an account may be given of it, as there shall be occasion.

4. That the severall ministers be required to read the said covenant publicly unto their people, the next Lord's day after they receive it, and prepare their people for it, against the time that they shall be called to take it.

5. That the said league and covenant be taken by the committees of parliament, in the place where they reside, and tendered also to the inhabitants of the town, within seven days after it comes to the said committees hands.

6. That the said committees after they have taken it themselves, do speedily disperse themselves through the said counties, so as three or four of them be together, on days appointed, at the chief places of meeting, for the severall divisions of the said counties: and summon all the ministers, church-wardens, constables, and other officers unto that place, where, after a sermon preached by one ap-

pointed by the committee for that purpose, they cause the same minister to tender the league and covenant unto all such ministers, and other officers, to be taken and subscribed by them, in the presence of the said committees.

7. That the said committees do withal give the said ministers in charge, to tender it unto all the rest of their parishioners the next Lord's day, making then unto their said parishioners some solemn exhortation, concerning the taking and observing thereof: and that the said committees do also return to the several parishes, the names of all such as have taken the covenant before them, who yet shall also subscribe their names in the book or roll with their neighbours, in their several parishes: and if any minister refuse or neglect to appear at the said summons, or refuse to take the said covenant before the committee, or to tender it to his parish, that then the committees be careful to appoint another minister to do it in his place.

8. That this league and covenant be tendered to all men, within the several parishes, above the age of eighteen, as well lodgers as inhabitants.

9. That it be recommended to the earl of Manchester, to take special care, that it be tendered and taken in the university of Cambridge.

10. That for the better encouragement of all sorts of persons to take it, it be recommended to the assembly of divines, to make a

brief declaration, by way of exhortation, to all sorts of persons to take it, as that which they judge not only lawful, but (all things considered) exceeding expedient and necessary, for all that wish well to religion, the king and kingdom to join in, and to be a singular pledge of God's gracious goodness to all the three kingdoms.

11. That if any minister do refuse to take, or to tender the covenant, or any other person or persons, do not take it the Lord's day that it is tendered, that then it be tendered to them again the Lord's day following, and if they still continue to refuse it, that then their names be returned by the minister that tenders it, and by the church-wardens, or constables, unto the committees, and by them to the house of commons, that such further course may be taken with them, as the houses of parliament shall see cause.

12. That all such persons as are within the several parishes, when notice is given of the taking of it, and do absent themselves from the church at the time of taking it, and come not in afterwards, to the minister and church wardens, or other officers, to take it in their presence before the return be made, be returned as refusers.

13. The manner of the taking it to be thus; "The minister to read the whole covenant distinctly and audibly in the pulpit, and during the time of the reading thereof, the whole congregation to be uncovered, and at the end of his reading thereof, all to take it

pointed by the committee for that purpose, they cause the same minister to tender the league and covenant unto all such ministers, and other officers, to be taken and subscribed by them, in the presence of the said committees.

7. That the said committees do withal give the said ministers in charge, to tender it unto all the rest of their parishioners the next Lord's day, making then unto their said parishioners some solemn exhortation, concerning the taking and observing thereof: and that the said committees do also return to the several parishes, the names of all such as have taken the covenant before them, who yet shall also subscribe their names in the book or roll with their neighbours, in their several parishes: and if any minister refuse or neglect to appear at the said summons, or refuse to take the said covenant before the committee, or to tender it to his parish, that then the committees be careful to appoint another minister to do it in his place.

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13. The manner of the taking it to be thus;
"The minister to read the whole covenant distinctly and audibly in the pulpit, and during the time of the reading thereof, the whole congregation to be uncovered, and at the end of his reading thereof, all to take it

standing, lifting up their right hands bare, and then afterwards to subscribe it severally by writing their names, (or their marks, to which their names are to be added) in a parchment roll, or a book, whereinto the covenant is to be inserted, purposely provided for that end, and kept as a record in the parish."

14. That the assembly of divines do prepare an exhortation for the better taking of the covenant: and that the said exhortation, and the declaration of the kingdoms of England and Scotland, joined in the armies for the vindication and defence of their religion, liberties and laws, against the popish, prelati- cal and malignant party, and passed the thirty of January last, * be publicly read, when the covenant is read, according to the fourth and sixth articles: and that a sufficient number of the copies of the said declaration be sent by the persons, appointed to send the true copies of the said covenant, in the first and second articles.

* Which declaration is printed by order of the convention of estates, in Scotland; and of parliament in England, 1644.

An Exhortation to the taking of the Solemn League and Covenant, for reformation, and defence of Religion, the honour and happiness of the King, and the peace and safety of the three Kingdoms of ENGLAND, SCOTLAND and IRELAND, by the Reverend Assembly of Divines at WESTMINSTER.

IF the power of religion, or solid reason, if loyalty to the king, and piety to their native country, or love to themselves, and natural affection to their posterity, if the example of men touched with a deep sense of all these, or extraordinary success from God thereupon, can awaken an embroiled bleeding remnant to embrace the sovereign, and only means of their recovery, there can be no doubt, but this solemn league and covenant will find, wheresoever it shall be tendered, a people ready to entertain it with all cheerfulness and duty.

And were it not commended to the kingdom by the concurrent encouragement of the honourable houses of parliament, the assembly of divines, the renowned city of London, multitudes of other persons of eminent rank and quality in this nation, and the whole body of Scotland, who have all willingly sworn and subscribed it, with rejoicing at the oath so graciously seconded from heaven already, by blasting the counsels, and breaking the power of the enemy more than ever; yet it goeth forth in its own strength, with such convincing evidence of equity, truth and righteousness,

as may raise in all (not wilfully ignorant, or miserably seduced) inflamed affections to join with their brethren in this happy bond, for putting an end to the present miseries, and for saving of both king and kingdom from utter ruin, now so strongly and openly laboured by the popish faction, and such as have been bewitched and besotted by that viperous and bloody generation.

For what is there almost in this covenant, which was not for substance either expressed, or manifestly included in that solemn protestation of May 5th, 1641. wherein the whole kingdom stands engaged until this day? The sinful neglect whereof doth (as we may justly fear) open one floodgate the more to let in all these calamities upon the kingdom, and cast upon it a necessity of renewing covenant, and of entering into this.

If it be said, the extirpation of prelacy, to wit, the whole hierarchial government (standing, as yet, by the known laws of the kingdom) is new, and unwarrantable: this will appear to all impartial understandings, (tho' new) to be not only warrantable, but necessary; if they consider (to omit what some say, that this government was never formally established by any laws of this kingdom at all) that the very life and soul thereof is already taken from it by an act passed in this present parliament*, so as (like Jezebel's carcase of which no more was left but the skull, the

* See collection of Acts, Num. 26.

feet, and the palms of her hands) nothing of jurisdiction remains, but what is precarious in them, and voluntary in those who submit unto them: that their whole government is at best but a human constitution, and such as is found and adjudged by both houses of parliament, (in which, the judgment of the whole kingdom is involved and declared) not only very prejudicial to the civil state, but a great hinderance also to the perfect reformation of religion. Yea, who knoweth it not to be too much an enemy thereunto, and destructive to the power of godliness, and pure administration of the ordinances of Christ? Which moved the well-affected, almost throughout this kingdom, long since to petition this parliament (as hath been desired before, even in the reign of queen Elisabeth, and of king James) for a total abolition of the same. Nor is any man hereby bound to offer any violence to their persons, but only in his place and calling, to endeavour their extirpation in a lawful way.

And as for those clergymen, who pretend that they (above all others) cannot covenant to extirpate that government, because they have (as they say) taken a solemn oath to obey the bishops, *in licitis et honestis**: they can tell, if they please, that they that have sworn obedience to the laws of the land, are not thereby prohibited from endeavouring by all lawful means the abolition of those

* *i. e.* In lawful and honest things.

laws, when they prove inconvenient or mischievous. And if yet their should any oath be found, into which any ministers or others have entered, not warranted by the laws of God and the land, in this case they must teach themselves and others, that such oaths call for repentance, not pertinacy in them.

If it be pleaded, That this covenant crosseth the oaths of supremacy and allegiance; there can be nothing further from truth; for, this covenant binds all, and more strongly engageth them to "preserve and defend the king's majesty's person, and authority, in the preservation and defence of the true religion and liberties of the kingdoms."

That scruple, That this is done without the king's consent, will soon be removed, if it be remembered, that the protestation of the fifth of May, before-mentioned, was in the same manner voted and executed by both houses, and after (by order of one house alone) sent abroad to all the kingdom, his majesty not excepting against it, or giving any stop to the taking of it, albeit he was then resident in person at Whitehall.

Thus Ezra and Nehemiah, (Ezra x. Neh. 9.) drew all the people into a covenant without any special commission from the Persian monarchs (then their sovereigns) so to do, albeit they were not free subjects, but vassals, and one of them (Neh. i.) the menial servant of Artaxerxes, then by conquest king of Judah also.

Nor hath this doctrine or practice been

deemed seditious or unwarrantable by the princes, that have sat upon the English throne, but justified and defended by queen Elisabeth of blessed memory, with the expence of much treasure and noble blood, in the united provinces of the Netherlands combined not only without, but against the unjust violence of Philip king of Spain; king James followed her steps, so far as to approve their union, and to enter into a league with them as free states; which is continued by his majesty now reigning, unto this day; who both by his expedition for relief of Rochel in France, and his strict confederacy with the prince of Orange, and the states general, notwithstanding all the importunity of Spain to the contrary, hath set to his seal that all that had been done by his royal ancestors, in maintainance of those who had so engaged and combined themselves, was just and warrantable.

And what had become of the religion, laws, and liberties of our sister nation of Scotland, had they not entered into such a solemn league and covenant at the beginning of the late troubles there? Which course however it was at first, by the popish and prelatic projectors, represented to his majesty, as an offence of the highest nature, justly deserving chastisement by the fury of a puissant army; yet when the matter came afterwards in cool blood to be debated, first by commissioners of both kingdoms, and then in open parliament here, (when all those of either house, who are now engaged at Oxford, were present in

parliament, and gave their votes therein) it was found, adjudged and declared by the king in parliament, that our dear brethren of Scotland had done nothing, but what became loyal and obedient subjects, and were thereupon by act of parliament publicly righted in all the churches of this kingdom, where they had been defamed.

Therefore however some men, hoodwinked and blinded by the artifices of those Jesuitical engineers, who have long conspired to sacrifice our religion to the idolatry of Rome, our laws, liberties and persons to arbitrary slavery, and our estates to their insatiable avarice, may possibly be deterred and amused with high threats and declarations, flying up and down on the wings of the royal name and countenance, now captivated and prostituted to serve all their lusts, to proclaim all rebels and traitors, who take this covenant; yet, let no faithful English heart be afraid to join with our brethren of all the three kingdoms in this solemn league, as sometimes the men of Israel, altho' under another king, did with the men of Judah, at the invitation of Hezekiah, 2 Chron. xxx.

What though those tongues set on fire by hell do rail and threaten? That God who was pleased to clear up the innocency of Mordecai and the Jews, against all the malicious aspersions of wicked Haman to his and their sovereign, so as all his plotting produced but this effect, that (Esther ix.) 'When the king's commandment and decree drew near

‘ to be put in execution, and the enemies of
‘ the Jews hoped to have power over them,
‘ it was turned to the contrary, and the Jews
‘ had rule over them that hated them, and
‘ laid hands on such as sought their hurt, so
‘ as no man could withstand them;’ and that
same God, who but even as yesterday vouch-
safed to disperse and scatter those dark clouds
and fogs, which overshadowed that loyal
and religious kingdom of Scotland, and to
make their righteousness to shine as clear as
the sun at noon-day, in the very eyes of
their greatest enemies, will doubtlessly stand
by all those, who with singleness of heart,
and a due sense of their own sins, and a ne-
cessity of reformation, shall now enter into
an everlasting covenant with the Lord, never
to be forgotten, to put an end to all those
unhappy and unnatural breaches, between
the king and such as are faithful in the land;
causing their ‘ righteousness and praise to spring
‘ forth before all the nations,’ to the terror
and confusion of those men of blood, the
confederate enemies of God and the king,
who have long combined, and have now
raked together the dregs and scum of many
kingdoms, to bury all the glory, honour and
liberty of this nation in the eternal grave of
dishonour and destruction.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 9. 1643-4.

AN Exhortation touching the taking of the solemn league and covenant, and for satisfying of such scruples, as may arise in the taking of it, was this day read the first and second time: and by vote upon the question assented unto, and ordered to be forthwith printed.

H. Elsyng, Cler. Par. D. Com*.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 29. 1644-5.

ORDERED by the commons assembled in parliament, that the solemn league and covenant be, on every day of fast and and public humiliation, publicly read, in every church and congregation within the kingdom: and that every congregation be enjoined to have one of the said covenants, fairly printed in a fair letter, in a table, fitted to hang up in some public place of the church to be read.

Hen. Elsyng, Cler. Parl. Dom. Com.

* Here did follow the solemn league and covenant, printed by an ordinance of parliament, February 1643-4. with the names of 228 members of the house of commons who had then taken it.

THE
G R E A T D A N G E R
OF
Covenant Breaking, &c.

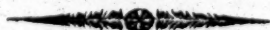
BEING THE SUBSTANCE

OF A

S E R M O N,

Preached January 14th, 1645, before the then
Lord Mayor of the City of LONDON, Sir THOMAS
ADAM's; together with the Sheriffs, Aldermen,
and common council of the said City, being the
day of their taking the Solemn League and Cove-
nant, at MICHAEL BASENSHAW, LONDON.

By the Rev. Mr. EDMOND CALAMY,
One of the Members of the Westminster Assembly of
Divines.



G L A S G O W:
PRINTED BY NAPIER AND KHULL,
FOR HUGH MONCRIEFF, THE PUBLISHER.

1799.

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THE
GREAT DANGER OF COVENANT-REFUSING,
AND COVENANT-BREAKING.

2 TIM. iii. 3.

—*Truce-breakers; or, covenant-breakers.*

IN the beginning of the chapter, the apostle tells us the condition that the church of God should be in, in the last days. ‘This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.’ In the second verse, he tells us the reason why these times should be such hard and dangerous times; ‘for men shall be lovers of themselves, covetous,’ &c. The reason is not drawn from the miseries and calamities of the last times, but from the sins and iniquities of the last times. ‘It is sin and iniquity that makes time truly perilous.’ Sin and sin only, takes away God’s love and favour from a nation, and makes God turn an enemy to it. Sin causeth God to take away the purity and power of his ordinances from a nation. Sin makes all the creatures to be armed against us, and makes our own consciences to fight against us. Sin is the cause of all the causes of perilous times. Sin is the cause of our civil wars, 2 Sam. xii. 11. Sin is the cause of our divisions, James iv. 1. Sin is the cause why men fall into such dangerous errors, 2 Theff. 2. 11. Sin brings such kinds of judgments, which no other thing can bring. Sin brings invisible, spiritual, and eternal judgments. It is sin that

makes God give over a nation to a reprobate sense, Rom. i. 24. Sin makes all times dangerous. Let the times be never so prosperous, yet if they be sinful times, they are times truly dangerous. And if they be not sinful, they are not dangerous, though never so miserable. It is sin that makes afflictions to be the fruits of God's revenging wrath, part of the curse due to sin, and a beginning of hell. It is sin, and sin only, that imbitters every affliction. Let us for ever look upon sin through these scripture spectacles.

The apostle in four verses, reckons up nineteen sins, as the causes of the miseries of the last days. I may truly call these nineteen sins, England's looking-glass, wherein we may see what are the clouds that eclipse God's countenance from shining upon us; the mountains that lie in the way to hinder the settlement of church-discipline: even these nineteen sins, which are as an iron-whip of nineteen strings, with which God is whipping England at this day; which are as nineteen fagots, with which God is burning and devouring England. My purpose is not to speak of all these sins; only let me propound a divine project, how to make the times happy for soul and body. And that is to strike, at the root of all misery, which is sin and iniquity. To repent for, and from all these nineteen sins, which are as the oil that feeds and increases the flame that is now consuming of us. For, because men are lovers of themselves, *usque ad contemptum Dei et republicæ; be*

cause men drive their own designs, not only to the neglect, but contempt of God, and the commonwealth. Because men are 'cove-tous, lovers of the world, more than lovers 'of God.' Because they are proud in head, heart, looks and apparel. Because they are unthankful, turning the mercies of God into instruments of sin, and making darts with God's blessings to shoot against God. Because men are unholy and heady, and make many covenants, and keep none. Because they are (as the Greek word *diabolo*i signifieth) devils, acting the devil's part, in accusing the brethren, and in bearing false witness one against another. Because they have a 'form of god-linefs, denying the power thereof,' &c. Hence it is that these times are so sad and bloody. These are thy enemies, O England, that have brought thee into this desolate condition! If ever God lead us back into the wilderness, it will be, because of these sins. And therefore, if ever ye would have blessed days, you must make it your great business to remove these nineteen mountains, and repent of these land-devouring and soul-destroying abominations.

At this time I shall pick out the first and tenth sin to speak on. The first is, *self-love*; which is placed in the forefront, as the cause of all the rest. Self-love is not only a sin that makes the times perilous, but it is the cause of all these sins that makes the times perilous; for, because men are lovers of themselves, therefore they are covetous, proud, unholy, &c.

The tenth sin is, *Truce-breakers*, and for fear lest the time should prevent me, I shall begin with this sin first.

The tenth sin then is truce-breakers; or as Rom. i. 31. 'Covenant-breakers.' The Greek word *aspondoi*, which signifieth three things; *First*, Such as are *foederis nescii*, as Beza renders it; or as others, *infoederabilis*; that is, such as refuse to enter into covenant. Or, *Secondly*, Such as are *foedifragi, qui pacta non servant*, as Estius hath it, or *sine fide*, as Ambrose; that is, such as break faith and covenant. Or, *Thirdly*, Such as are *implacabilis*; or as others, *sine pace*; that is, such as are implacable, and haters of peace.

According to this threefold sense of the word, I shall gather these three observations.

Doctrine 1. That to be a covenant-refuser, is a sin that makes the times perilous.

Doct. 2. That to be a covenant-breaker, is a sin that makes the times perilous.

Doct. 3. That to be a peace-hater, or a truce-hater, is a sin that makes the times perilous.

To begin with the first.

Doctrine first, That to be a covenant-refuser, is a sin that makes the times perilous; To be *foederis nescius*, or *infoederabilis*. For the understanding of this, you must know, that there are two sorts of covenants, there are devilish and hellish covenants, and there are godly and religious covenants. First, There are devilish covenants, such as Acts xxiii. 12. and Isa. xxviii. 15. Such as the holy league,

as it was unjustly called in France, against the Hugonites, and that of our gun-powder traitors in England.

Now to refuse to make such covenants, is not to make the times perilous, but the taking of them makes the times perilous. *Secondly*, They are godly covenants, such as Job xxxi. 1, 'I have made a covenant with mine eyes, 'why then should I think upon a maid?' Such as Psal. cxix. 106. 'I have sworn, and I will 'perform it, that I will keep thy righteous 'judgments;' such as 2 Chron. xv. 14. and such as this is, which you are met to take this day. For you are to swear to such things, which you are bound to endeavour after, though you did not swear. Your swearing is not *solum venculum*, but *novum venculum*, is not the only, but only a new, and another bond to tie you to the obedience of the things you swear unto; which are so excellent and so glorious, that if God give those that take it, a heart to keep it, it will make these three kingdoms the glory of the world. And as one of the reverend commissioners of Scotland said, when it was first taken in a most solemn manner at Westminster, by the parliament and the assembly, "That if the pope should have this covenant written upon a wall over against him sitting in his chair, it would be unto him like the hand-writing to Belshazzar, causing his joints to loose, and his knees to smite one against another." And I may add, that if it be faithfully and fully kept, it will make all the devils in hell to tremble, as

fearing lest their kingdom should not stand long. Now then for a man to be an anti-covenanter, and to be such a covenant-refuser, it must needs be a sin that makes the times perilous.

And the reasons are,

Reason 1. Because you shall find in scripture, That when any nation did enter into a solemn religious covenant, God did exceedingly bless and prosper that nation after that time, as appears, 2 Chron. xv. 19. 2 Kings xi. 20. And we have a promise for it, Deut. xxix. 12, 13. 'That thou shouldst enter in-
' to covenant with the Lord thy God,' &c.
'That he may establish thee to day for a peo-
' ple to himself, and that he may be unto thee
' a God,' &c. And therefore to be a covenant-refuser, is to make our miseries perpetual.

Reason 2. Because it is the highest act of God's love to man, to vouchsafe to engage himself by oath and covenant to be his God: so it is the highest demonstration of man's love to God, to bind himself by oath and covenant to be God's. There is nothing obligeth God more to us, than to see us willing to tie, and bind ourselves unto his service: and therefore, they that in this sense are anti-covenanters, are sons of Belial, that refuse the yoke of the Lord, that say, as Psal. ii. 3.
'Let us break his bands asunder, and cast a-
' way his cords, from us;' such as *oderunt vincula pietatis*, which is a soul-destroying, and a land-destroying sin.

Reason 3. Because that the union of Eng-

land, Scotland and Ireland, into one covenant, is the chief, if not the only preservative of them at this time: you find in our English chronicles, that England was never destroyed, but when divided within itself. Our civil divisions brought in the Romans, the Saxons, Danes and Normans; but now the anti-covenanters, they divide the parliament within itself, and the city within itself, and England against itself; he is as a stone separated from the building, which is of no use to itself, and threateneth the ruin of the building. Jesus Christ is called in scripture, the 'Corner-stone,' which is a stone that unites the two ends of the building together. Jesus Christ is a stone of union: and therefore they that sow division, and study unjust separation, have little of Jesus Christ in them. When the ten tribes began to divide from the other two tribes, they presently began to war one against another, and to ruin one another: the anti-covenanter, he divides and separates and disunites. And therefore he makes perilous times.

My chief aim is at the second doctrine, which is,

Doct. 2. That for a covenant-taker to be a covenant-breaker, is a sin that makes the times perilous.

For the opening of this point, I must distinguish again of covenant. There are civil, and there are religious covenants; a civil covenant, is a covenant between man and man; and of this the text is primarily, though not

only to be understood. Now, for a man to break promise and covenant with his brother, is a land-destroying, and a soul-destroying abomination. We read, 2 Sam. xxi. That because Saul had broken the covenant that Joshua made with the Gibeonites, God sent a famine in David's time, of three years continuance, to teach us, that if we falsify our word and oath, God will avenge covenant-breaking, though it be forty years after. Famous is that text, Jer. xxxiv. 17, 18, 19, 20. Because the princes and the people brake the covenant which they had made with their servants, though but their servants, God tells them, 'Because ye have not hearkened unto me, in proclaiming liberty every one to his brother,' &c. 'Behold, I proclaim liberty for you, saith the Lord, to the sword, to the pestilence, and to the famine: and I will make you to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth,' &c. We read also, Ezek. xvii. 18, 19, 20. That God tells Zedekiah, because he brake the covenant he had made with the king of Babylon, that therefore, 'He would recompense upon his head the oath that he had despised, and the covenant that he had broken, and would bring him to Babylon, and plead with him there for the trespass which he had trespassed against the Lord.' David tells us, Psal. xv. 4. That it is a sin that shuts a man out of heaven. The Turkish history tell us of a covenant made between Amurath, that great Turk, and Ladislaus king of Hungary, and

how the pope absolved Ladislaus from the oath, and provoked him to renew the war: In which war, the Turk being put to the worst, and despairing of victory, pulls out a paper which he had in his bosom, wherein the league was written, and said, "O thou God of the Christians, if thou beest a true God, be avenged of those that have, without cause, broken the league made by calling upon thy name." And the story says, that after he had spoken these words, he had, as it were, "a new heart, and spirit put into him and his foldiers," and that they obtained a glorious victory over Ladislaus. Thus God avenged the quarrel of man's covenant. The like story we read of Rodolphus duke of Sweden, who, by the pope's instigation, waged war with Henry IV. emperor of Germany, to whom he had sworn the contrary. The pope sent a crown to him with this motto, *Petra dedit Petro, Petrus diadema Rodolpho*: but in the fight it chanced that Rodolphus lost his right hand, and falling sick upon it, he called for it, and said, *Spectate hanc dextram legitimam supplicia expendentem, quæ fidem sacramento munitum et Henrico Domino meo datam vobis urgentibus, præter equum et jus temere violavit*: Behold this right hand with which I subscribed to the emperor, with which I have violated my oath, and therefore I am rightly punished. I will not trouble you with relating that gallant story of Regulus, that chose rather to expose himself to a cruel death, than to falsify his oath to the Carthaginians. The sum of

all is, if it be such a crying abomination to break covenant between man and man; and if such persons are accounted as the off-scouring of men, not worthy to live in a Christian, no not in a heathen common-wealth: if it be a sin that draws down vengeance from heaven; much more for a man to enter into covenant with the great Jehovah, and to break such a religious engagement: this must needs be a destroying, and soul-damning sin. And of such religious covenants I am now to speak.

There are two covenants that God made with man, a covenant of nature, and a covenant of grace. The covenant of nature, or of works, was made with Adam, and all mankind in him. This covenant Adam broke, and God presently had a quarrel against him for breaking of it, Gen. iii. 8, 9. And to avenge the quarrel of the covenant, he was thrust out of paradise, and there was a sword also placed at the east end of the garden of Eden, to avenge covenant-breaking. And by nature we are all children of wrath, heirs of hell, because of the breach of that covenant. And therefore we should never think of original sin, or of the sinfulness and cursedness of our natural condition, but we should remember what a grievous sin covenant-breaking is.

But after man was fallen, God was pleased to strike a new covenant, which is usually called a covenant of grace, or of reconciliation, a copy of which you shall read, Ezek. xvi. 7, 8, 9. This was first propounded to

Adam by way of promise, Gen. iii. 'The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head.' And then to Abraham by way of covenant, Gen. xvii. 'In thy seed shall all the nations of the world be blessed.' And then to Moses by way of testament, Exod. xxxiii. It is nothing else but the free and gracious tender of Jesus Christ, and all his rich purchases to all the lost and undone sons of Adam, that shall believe in him: or as the phrase is, Isa. lvi. 4. 'That shall take hold of the covenant.' Now you must know that baptism is a seal of this covenant, and that all that are baptized, do sacramentally, at least engage themselves to walk before God, and to be upright; and God likewise engages himself to be their God. This covenant is likewise renewed when we come to the Lord's supper, wherein we bind ourselves, by a sacramental oath, unto thankfulness to God for Christ. Add further, that besides this general covenant of grace, whereof the sacraments are seals, there are particular and personal, and family and national covenants. Thus, Job had his covenant, Job iii. 1. and David, Psal. cxix. 106. And when he came to be king, he joined in covenant with his people to serve the Lord. Thus Aza, Jehoidah, and Josiah, &c. Thus the people of Israel had not only a covenant in circumcision, but renewed a covenant at Horeb and Moab, and did often again and again bind themselves to God by vow and covenant. And thus the churches of Christ. Christians, besides the vow in bap-

tism, have many personal and national engagements unto God by covenant, which are nothing else but the renovations, and particular applications of that first vow in baptism. Of this nature is that you are to renew this day, &c.

Now give me leave to shew you what a sword-procuring and soul-undoing sin, this sin of covenant-breaking is; and then the reason of it. Famous is that text, Lev. xxvi. 25. 'And I will send my sword, which shall 'avenge the quarrel of my covenant.' The words in the Hebrew run thus, 'I will avenge 'the avengement,' in the Greek [*ekdikousan diken*] the Latins *ulciscar ultionem*; which importeth this much, that God is at open war, and at public defiance with those that break his covenant: he is not only angry with them, but he will be revenged of them. 'The 'Lord hath a controversy with all covenant-breakers,' Hof. iv. i. as it is, Lev. xxvi. 23. 'The Lord will walk contrary to them.' In the xxix. of Deuteronomy. First, God takes his people into covenant, and then he tells them of the happy condition they should be in, if they did keep the covenant; but if they did break covenant, he tells them, verse 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25. 'That the Lord will 'not spare him; but the anger of the Lord 'and his jealousy shall smoke against that 'man, and all the curses that are written in 'in this book shall lie upon him, and the 'Lord shall blot out his name from under 'heaven, and the Lord shall separate him,'

ſc. ' And when the nation ſhall ſay, Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto the land? What meaneth the heat of this great anger? Then ſhall men ſay, Becauſe they have forfeaken the covenant of the Lord God of their fathers,' ſc. This was the ſin that cauſed God to ſend his people Iſrael into captivity, and to remove the candleſtick from the Aſian churches. It is for this ſin, that the ſword is now devouring Germany, Ireland, and England, ſc. God hath ſent his ſword to avenge the quarrel of his covenant.

The reaſons why this ſin is a God-provoking ſin, are,

Reason 1. Becauſe that, to ſin againſt the covenant, is a greater ſin, than to ſin againſt a commandment of God, or to ſin againſt a promiſe, or to ſin againſt an ordinance of God. Firſt, It is a greater ſin, than to break a commandment of God; for the more mercy there is in the thing we ſin againſt the greater is the ſin. Now there is more mercy in a covenant than in a bare commandment. The commandment tells us our duty, but gives no power to do it. But the covenant of grace, gives power to do what it requires to be done. And therefore, if it be a hell-procuring ſin, to break the leaſt of God's commandments, much more to be a covenant-breaker, Heb. x. 28, 29. 2. It is a greater ſin, than to ſin againſt a promiſe of God; becauſe a covenant is a promiſe joined with an oath. It is a mutual ſtipulation between God and us: and therefore, if it be a great

fin to break promise, much more to break covenant. 3. It is a greater fin than to sin against an ordinance, because the covenant is the root and ground of all the ordinances. It is by virtue of the covenant, that we are made partakers of the ordinances: the word is the book of the covenant, and the sacraments are the seals of the covenant. And if it be a fin of an high nature to sin against the book of the covenant, and the seals of the covenant, much more against the covenant itself. To break covenant, is a fundamental fin; it razeth the very foundation of Christianity, because the covenant is the foundation of all the privileges, and prerogatives, and hopes of the saints of God: and therefore we read, Eph. ii. 12. that a stranger from the covenant, is one without hope. All hope of heaven is cut off, where the covenant is willingly broken. To break covenant, is an universal fin, it includes all other sins. By virtue of the covenant, we tie ourselves to the obedience of God's commandments, we give up ourselves to the guidance of Jesus Christ, we own him for our Lord and King; all the promises of this life, and that which is to come, are contained within the covenant. The ordinances are fruits of the covenant: and therefore they that forsake the covenant, commit many sins in one, and bring not only many, but all curses upon their heads. The sum of the first argument is, 'If the Lord will avenge the quarrel of his commandments,' if God

was avenged upon the stick-gatherer for breaking the Sabbath, much more will he be avenged upon a covenant-breaker. If God will avenge the quarrel of a promise, if the quarrel of an ordinance: If they that reject the ordinances shall be punished, 'of how much forer punishment shall they be thought worthy, that trample under their feet the blood of the covenant?' If God was avenged of those that abused the ark of the covenant, much more will he punish those that abuse the Angel of the covenant.

The second reason why covenant-breaking, is such a land-destroying sin, is, because it is a solemn and serious thing to enter into a covenant with God; a matter of great weight and importance, that it is impossible but God should be exceedingly provoked with these that slight it, and disrespect it. The vow in baptism is the first, the most general, and the solemnest that any Christian took, saith Chrysostom; wherein he doth not only promise, but engage himself by covenant in the sight of God, and his holy angels, to be the servant of Jesus Christ; and therefore God will not hold him guiltless, that breaks this vow. The solemnity and weightiness of covenant-taking, consisteth in three things.

1. Because it is made with the glorious majesty of heaven and earth, who will not be trifled and baffled withal; and therefore, what Jehoshaphat said to his judges, 2 Chron. xix. 6. 'Take heed what ye do: for ye judge not for men, but for the Lord, who is with you in

Numb. IV.

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‘ the judgment. Wherefore now, let the fear
 ‘ of the Lord be upon,’ &c. The like I may
 say to every one that enters into covenant
 this day. ‘ Take heed what ye do; for it is
 ‘ the Lord’s covenant, and there is no iniqui-
 ‘ ty with the Lord: wherefore now, let the
 ‘ fear of the Lord be upon you; for our God
 ‘ is a holy God, he is a jealous God, he will
 ‘ not forgive your transgressions, nor your
 ‘ sins,’ as Joshua saith, Josh. xxiv. 19.

2. Because the articles of the covenant are
 weighty, and of great importance. In the co-
 venant of grace, God engageth himself to
 give Christ, and with him all temporal, spi-
 ritual, and eternal blessings, and we engage
 ourselves to be his faithful servants all our
 days. In this covenant, we oblige ourselves
 to do great matters, that nearly concern the
 glory of God, the good of our souls, and the
 happiness of the three kingdoms. And in-
 such holy and heavenly things, which so near-
 ly concern our everlasting estate, to dally
 and trifle, must needs incense the anger of
 the great Jehovah.

3. The manner used both by Jews, hea-
 thens and Christians, in entering into cove-
 nant, doth clearly set out the weightiness of
 it, and what a horrible sin it is to break it.
 The custom among the Jews, will appear by
 divers texts of scripture; Jer. xxxiv. 18. it is
 said, ‘ And I will give the men that have
 ‘ transgressed my covenant, which they had
 ‘ made before me, when they cut the calf in
 ‘ twain, and passed between the parts thereof.’

The words they used when they passed between the parts, were 'So God divide me, if I keep not covenant,' Neh. v. 12, 13. Nehemiah took an oath of the priests, and shook his lap, and said, 'So God shake out every man from his house, and from his labour, that performeth not this promise; even thus be he shaken out and emptied. And all the congregation said, Amen.' In the xv. of Genesis, Abraham divided the heifer, and she-goat, and a ram, &c. 'And when the sun was down, a smoaking furnace, and a burning lamp, passed between these pieces.' This did represent God's presence, saith Clemens Alexandrinus, and it was said, as if God should say, "Behold, this day I enter into covenant with thee, and if thou keepest covenant, I will be as a burning lamp to enlighten, and to comfort thee: but if thou breakest covenant, I will be like a smoaking furnace to consume thee." Thus also, Exod. xxiv. 6. Moses makes a covenant with Israel, and offers sacrifices, and takes the blood of the sacrifices and divides it, and half of it he sprinkles upon the altar, (which represents God's part) and the other half he sprinkles upon the people, as if he should say, "As this blood is divided, so will God divide you, if ye break covenant." This was the custom among the Jews. Amongst the Romans, *Cæsa firmabant foedera porca*. And when it was divided, the *fecialis* gave one half to one party, and the other to the other, and said, 'so God divide you asunder, if

‘you break this covenant,’ and let God do so much the more by how much he is the more able, *hinc foedas a foedo animali (scilicet porco) divisio*. Sometimes they make covenants by taking a stone in their hands, and saying, “If I make this covenant seriously and faithfully, then let the great Jupiter bless me; if not so, let me be cast away from the face of the gods, as I cast away this stone.” This was called *jurare per Jovem lapidem*. All these things are not empty notions and metaphorical shadows, but real and substantial practices; signifying unto us, that God will and must (for it stands with his honour to do it) divide and break them in pieces that break covenant with him. This day you are to take a covenant by the lifting up of your hands unto the most high God, which is a most emphatical ceremony, whereby we do as it were, call God to be a witness and a judge of what we do, and a rewarder or revenger, according as we keep or break this covenant. If we keep it the lifting up of our hands will be as an evening sacrifice; if we break it, the lifting up our hands will be as the lifting up of the hands of a malefactor at the bar, and procure woe and misery, and wringing of hands at the great day of appearing.

The third reason why God will be avenged of those that are covenant-breakers, is, because that a covenant is the greatest obligation, and the most forcible claim that can be invented to tie us to obedience and service. God may justly challenge obedience without

covenanting, by virtue of creation, preservation and redemption: he hath made us, and when lost, he hath purchased us with his blood. But being willing more abundantly to manifest his love, that we be the more fastened to him, he hath tied himself to us, and us to him, by the strong bond of a covenant: as if God should say, Oh ye sons of men I see you are rebellious, and sons of Belial, and therefore if it be possible I will make sure. I will engage you unto me, not only by creation, preservation and redemption, but also by the right of covenant and association. I will make you mine by promise and oath. And surely he that will break these bonds, is as bad as the man possessed with the devil in the gospel, whom no chains could keep fast. When we enter into covenant with God, we take the oath of supremacy, and swear unto him, that he should be our chief lord and governor, and that we will admit of no sovereign power or jurisdiction, but that God shall be all in all. We likewise take the oath of allegiance, to be his servants and vassals, and that he shall be our supreme in spirituals and temporals. Now, for a Christian that believes there is a God, to break both these oaths of allegiance and supremacy, it is cursed treason against the God of heaven, which surely God will be avenged of. Amongst the Romans, when any soldiers was pressed, he took an oath to serve the captain faithfully, and not to forsake him, and he was called *miles per sacramentum*. Sometimes one took an oath for

all the rest, and the others only said, the same oath, that A. B. took, the same do I. And these were called *milites per conjurationem*, or, *milites evocati*. And when any soldier forsook his captain, he had the martial law executed upon him. Thus it is with every Christian: he is a professed soldier of Christ, he hath taken press-money, he hath sworn and taken the sacrament upon it to become the Lord's, he is *miles per sacramentum*, and *miles per conjurationem*: and if he forsake his captain and break covenant, the great Lord of Hosts will be avenged of him, as it is written, Jer. xi. 3. 'Cursed be the man that obeyeth not the words of the covenant.' To break covenant is a sin of perjury, which is a sin of an high nature; and if for oaths the land mourneth, much more for breach of oaths, To break covenant is a sin of spiritual adultery; for by covenanting with God, we do as it were, 'join ourselves in marriage to God,' as the Hebrew word signifieth, Jer. l. 5. Now to break the marriage knot, is a sin for which God may justly give a bill of divorce to a nation. To break covenant is a sin of injustice; for by our covenant we do enter, as it were, into bond to God, and engage ourselves as a creditor to his debtor; now the sin of injustice is a land-destroying sin.

The fourth reason why God must needs be avenged on those that are covenant-breakers, is, it is an act of the highest sacrilege that can be committed. For, by virtue of the covenant, the Lord lays claim to us as his pe-

culiar inheritance, Ezek. xvi. 8. 'I fware unto thee, and entered into covenant with thee, and thou becamest mine.' Jer. xxxi. 33. 'I will be their God, and they shall be my people.' It is a worthy observation, that in the covenant there is a double surrender, one on God's part, and another on our part. God Almighty makes a surrender of himself, and of his Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Behold, saith God, I am wholly thy God; all my power, and mercy, and goodness, &c. is all thine; my Son is thine, and all his rich purchases; my Spirit is thine, and all his graces: this is God's surrender. On our parts, when we take hold of the covenant, we make a delivery of our bodies and souls into the hands of God; we chuse him to be our Lord and governor, we resign up ourselves into his hands. Lord, we are thine at thy disposing: we alienate ourselves, and make a deed or gift of ourselves, and give thee lock and key of head, heart, and affections, &c. This is the nature of every religious covenant, but especially of the covenant of grace. But now for a Christian to call in, as it were, his surrender, to disclaim his resignation, to steal away himself from God, and lay claim to himself after his alienation; to fulfil his own lusts, to walk after his own ways, to do what he lists, and not what he hath covenanted to do, and so to rob God of what is his: this is the highest degree of sacrilege, which God will never suffer to go unpunished. And surely if the stick-gatherer, that did but

alienate a little of God's time; and Ananias and Sapphira, that withheld but some part of their estate: and if Belshazzar for abusing the consecrated vessels of the temple, were so grievously punished; how much more will God punish those that alienate themselves from the service of that God to whom they have sworn to be obedient? It is observed by a learned author, of the famous commanders of the Romans, That they never prospered after they had defiled and robbed the temple of Jerusalem. First, Pompey the Great, he went into the *sanctum sanctorum*, a place never before entered by any but the high-priest, and the Lord blasted him in all his proceedings, after that time: *ut ille qui terram non habuit ante ad victoriam, deesset ille terra ad sepulturam*: That he that before that time wanted earth to overcome, had not at last earth enough to bury him withal. The next was Crassus, who took away 10,000 talents of gold from the temple, and afterward died, by having gold poured down his throat. The third was Cassius, who afterwards killed himself. If then God did thus avenge himself of those that polluted his consecrated temple; much more will he not leave them unpunished, that are the living temples of the Holy Ghost, consecrated by God by covenant, and afterwards proving sacrilegious, robbing God of that worship and service, which they have sworn to give him.

The *fifth* reason why this sin makes the times perilous, is, because covenant-breakers

are reckoned amongst the number of those that have the mark of reprobation upon them. I do not say, that they are all reprobates, yet I say, that the apostle makes it to be one of those sins which are committed by those that are given up 'to a reprobate mind,' Rom. i. 28, 31. The words are spoken of the heathen, and are to be understood of covenants made between man and man; and then the argument will hold a *fortiori*. If it be the brand of a reprobate to break covenant with man, much more a covenant made with the great Jehovah, by the lifting up of our hands to heaven.

The *last* reason is, because it is a sin against such infinite mercy. It is said, Jer. xxxi. 22. 'Which my covenant they brake, although I 'was an husband unto them;' that is, altho' I had chosen them for my spouse, and married myself unto them, with an everlasting covenant of mercy, and entailed heaven unto them, yet they have broken my covenant. This was a great provocation. Thus Ezek. xvi. 4, 5. 'When thou wast in thy blood, 'and no eye pitied thee, to have compassion 'upon thee, I said unto thee when thou wast 'in thy blood, Live: Yea, I said unto thee, 'Live.' It is twice repeated. As if God should say, "Mark it, O Israel, when no eye regarded thee, then I said unto thee, Live." Behold, saith God, verse 8. 'Thy time was 'the time of love.' Behold, and wonder at it. 'And I spread my skirt over thee, and 'covered thy nakedness: yea, I sware unto

‘thee, and entered into covenant with thee, ‘faith the Lord, and thou becamest mine:’ And yet for all this, thou hast sinned grievously against me. ‘Wo, wo unto thee, saith ‘the Lord God,’ Ezek. xvi. 23. There is a fivefold mercy in the covenant, especially in the covenant of grace, that makes the sin of covenant-breaking to be so odious.

1. It is a mercy, that the great God will vouchsafe to enter into covenant with dust and ashes. As David saith in another case, ‘Is it a light thing to be the son-in-law of a ‘king?’ So may I say, “Is it a light matter for the Lord of heaven and earth to condescend so far as to covenant with his poor creatures, and thereby to become their debtors, and to make them, as it were, his equals?” When Jonathan and David entered into a covenant of friendship, though one was a king’s son, the other a poor shepherd, yet there was then a kind of equality between them. But this must be understood warily, according to the text, 1 Cor. i. 9. ‘Blessed ‘be God, who hath called us unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.’ He is still our Lord, though in fellowship with us. It is a covenant of infinite condescension on God’s part, whereby he enters into a league of friendship with his people.

2. The mercy is the greater, because this covenant was made after the fall of Adam. After we had broken the first covenant, that the Lord should try us the second time, is not only an act of infinite goodness of God, but

of infinite mercy. There is a difference between the goodness and the mercy of God. Goodness may be shewed to those that are not in misery: but mercy supposeth misery. And this was our condition after the breach of the first covenant.

3. That God should make this covenant with man, and not with devils.

4. This sets out the mercy of the covenant, because it contains such rare and glorious benefits, and therefore it is called a covenant of life and peace, Mal. ii. 5. 'An everlasting covenant even the sure mercies of David,' Isa. lv. 3. It is compared to the waters of Noah, Isa. liv. 6. Famous are those two texts, Exod. xix. 5, 6. Jer. xxxii. 40, 41. Texts that hold forth strong consolation. By virtue of the covenant, heaven is not only made possible, but certain to all believers, and certain by way of oath. It is by virtue of the covenant, that we call him Father, and may lay claim to all the power, wisdom, goodness and mercy, &c. that is in God. As Jehoshaphat told the king of Israel, to whom he was joined in covenant, 'I am as thou art, my people as thy people, my horses as thy horses:' so doth God say to all that are in covenant with him, 'My power is thine, my holiness is thine,' &c. By virtue of this covenant, whatsoever thou wantest, God cannot deny it thee, if it be good for thee. Say, unto God, Lord, thou hast sworn to take away my heart of stone, and to give me a heart of flesh, thou hast sworn to write thy law in my heart, thou

hast sworn to circumcise my heart, thou hast sworn to give me Christ, to be my king, priest and prophet, &c. And God cannot but be a covenant-keeper. By virtue of this covenant, God cannot but accept of a poor penitent sinner, laying hold upon Christ for pardon, 2 Chron. vii. 14. Jer. iii. 14. *Promissa hæc tua sunt Domine, et quis falli timet cum promittit ipsa veritas?* In a word, we may challenge pardon and heaven by our covenant, 1 John i. 9. God is not only merciful but just to forgive us; we may challenge heaven through Christ, out of justice.

5. And lastly, That the condition of the covenant on our parts, should be upon such easy terms, therefore it is called a covenant of free grace, and all that God requires of us is, to take hold of this covenant, Isa. lvi. to receive this gift of righteousness, Rom. v. to take all Christ, as he is tendered in the covenant; and that which is the greatest consolation of all, God hath promised in his covenant to do our part for us, Jer. xxxi. 33, 34. Therefore it is called a testament, rather than a covenant. In the New Testament, the word *diatheke*, is always used by the apostle, and not *syntheke*. Heaven is conveyed unto the elect by way of legacy. It is part of God's testament, to write his law in our hearts, and to cause us to walk in his ways, &c. Put these together, seeing there is such infinite mercy in the covenant. A mercy, "for God to enter into covenant with us, to do it with us and not the angels, with us fallen, with

upon such easy terms, and to make such a covenant that contains so many, and not only so, but all blessings here and hereafter, in the womb of it." It must needs be a land-destroying, and soul-destroying sin, to be a covenant-breaker.

The use and application of this doctrine is fourfold.

Use 1. Of information. If it be such a land-destroying sin, to be a covenant-breaker; let us from hence learn the true cause of all the miseries that have happened unto England in these late years. The womb out of which all our calamities are come. England hath broken covenant with God; and now God is breaking England in pieces, even as a potter breaks a vessel in pieces. 'God hath sent his sword to avenge the quarrel of his covenant,' as Christ whipt the buyers and sellers out of the temple, with whips made of the cords, which they had brought to tie their oxen and sheep withal. A covenant is a cord to tie us to God; and now God hath made an iron whip of that covenant, which we have broken asunder, to whip us withal.

We are a nation in covenant with God, we have the books of the covenant, the Old and New Testament, we have the seals of the covenant, baptism, and the Lord's supper; we have the messengers of the covenant, the ministers of the gospel; we have the angel of the covenant, the Lord Jesus Christ, fully, freely, and clearly set out before us in the ministry of the word: but alas! are not these

blessings amongst us, as the ark was amongst
 the Philistines, rather as prisoners, than as
 privileges, rather *in testimonium et ruinam,*
quam in salutem; rather for our ruin, than
 for our happiness? May it not be said of us,
 as reverend Mulin said of the French protes-
 tants, "While they burned us (saith he) for
 reading the scriptures, we burned with zeal
 to be reading of them; now with our liberty,
 is bred also negligence and disesteem of God's
 word." So is it with us, while we were under
 the tyranny of bishops; Oh! how sweet was
 a fasting day? How beautiful were the feet of
 them that brought the gospel of peace unto
 you? How dear and precious were God's peo-
 ple one to another? &c. But now, how are
 our fasting days slighted and vilified? How
 are the people of God divided one from a-
 nother, railing upon (instead of loving) one
 another? And is not the godly ministry as much
 persecuted by the tongues of some that would
 be accounted godly, as heretofore by the
 bishop's hands? Is not the Holy Bible by some
 rather wrested than read? Wrested, I say, by
 ignorant and unstable souls, to their own de-
 struction? And as for the seals of the cove-
 nant, (1.) For the Lord's supper, how oft
 have we spilt the blood of Christ by our un-
 worthy approaches to his table? And hence
 it is, that he is now spilling our blood; how
 hard a matter is it, to obtain power to keep
 the blood of Christ from being profaned by
 ignorant and scandalous communicants? And
 can we think, that God will be easily entreated

to sheath up his bloody sword, and to cease shedding our blood?

2. For the sacrament of baptism; how cruel are men grown to their little infants, by keeping of them from the seal of entrance into the kingdom of heaven, and making their children to be just in the same condition with the children of Turks and Infidels*? I remember, at the beginning of these wars, there was a great fear fell upon godly people about their little children, and all their care was for their preservation and their safety; and for the continuance of the gospel to them, &c. But now, our little children are likely to be in a worse condition than ever. And all this is come upon us as a just punishment of our baptismal covenant-breaking. And as for Jesus Christ, who is the angel of the covenant: are there not some amongst us that ungod Jesus Christ? And is it not fit and equal that God should unchurch us, and unpeople us? Are there not thousands that have sworn to be Christ's servants, and yet are in their lives the vassals of sin and Satan? And shall not God be avenged of such a nation as this? These things considered, it is no wonder our miseries are so great, but the wonder is, that they are not greater.

The second use is, an use of examination. Days of humiliation, ought to be days of self-examination. Let us therefore upon such a day as this, examine, whether we be not amongst the number of those that make the

* Meaning the Anabaptists, and other sectarians.

times perilous, whether we be not covenant breakers? Here I will speak of three covenants.

1. Of the covenant we have made with God in our baptism. 2. Of the covenant we have made with God in our distresses. 3. And especially of this covenant you are to renew this day.

1. Of the covenant which we made in baptism, and renew every time we come to the Lord's supper, and upon our solemn days of fasting. There are none here, but I may say of them, 'the vows of God are upon you. You are *servi nati, empti, jurati*; you are the born, bought, and sworn servants of God; you have made a surrender of yourselves unto God and Christ. The question I put to you is this: How often have you broken covenant with God? It is said, Isa. xxxiii. 14. 'The sinners in Zion are afraid; who shall dwell with everlasting torments? Who shall dwell with devouring fire?' &c. When God comes to a church-sinner, to a sinner under the Old Testament, much more to a Christian sinner, a sinner under the New Testament, and layeth to his charge his often covenant breaking, fearfulness shall possess him, and he will cry out, 'Oh! woe is me, who can dwell with everlasting burnings? Our God is a consuming fire, and we are as stubble before him; who can stand before his indignation?' Nah. i. 6. 'Who can abide in the fierceness of his anger? When his fury is poured forth like fire, and the rocks are thrown down before him. Who can stand? Of all sorts of creatures, a sinful Christian

shall not be able to stand before the Lord, when he comes to visit the world for their sins. For, when a Christian sins against God, he sins not only against the commandment, but against the covenant. And in every sin he is a commandment-breaker, and a covenant-breaker. And therefore, whereas the apostle saith, 'tribulation and anguish upon every soul that sinneth: but first upon the Jews,' &c. I may add, first, upon the Christian, then upon the Jew, and then upon the Grecian: Because the covenant made with the Christian, is called a better covenant: and therefore his sins have a higher aggravation in them. There is a notable passage in Austin, in which he brings in the devil thus pleading with God, against a wicked Christian at the day of judgment; *Æquissime judex, judica quod æquum est; judica meum esse qui tuus esse noluit post renunciationem; ut quod invasit pannos meos; Quid apud eum lascivia, incontinentia, &c. quibus ipse renunciaverit? Quid intemperantia, quid gula, quid fastus, quid cætera mea? Hæc omnia mea post renunciationem invasit, meus esse voluit, mea concupivit; judica æquissime judex, quoniam quam tu non dedignatus es tanto prætio liberare, ipse mihi postmodum voluit obligare.* That is, Oh! thou righteous Judge, give righteous judgment; judge him to be mine, who refused to be thine, even after he had renounced me in his baptism; what had he to do to wear my livery? What had he to do with gluttony, drunkenness, pride, wantonness, incontinency, and

the rest of my ware? All these things he hath practised, since he renounced the devil, and all his works. Mine he is, judge righteous judgment; for he whom thou hast not disdained to die for, hath obliged himself to me by his sins, &c.

Now, What can God say to this charge of the devil's, but, take him, devil, seeing he would be thine, take him, torment him with everlasting torments. Cyprian brings in the devil thus speaking to Christ in the great day of judgment, *Ego pro istis quos mecum vides nec alapas accepi, nec flagella sustinui, nec crucem pertuli, nec sanguinem fudi, sed nec regnum cœlestē illis promitto, nec ad Paradisum evoco, et tamen se mihi sūaque omnia consecrarunt.* I have not (saith the devil) been whipped, and scourged, and crucified, neither have I shed my blood for those whom thou seest with me; I do not promise them a kingdom of heaven, &c. and yet these men have wholly consecrated themselves to me and my service. Indeed if the devil could make such gainful covenants with us, and bestow such glorious mercies upon us as are contained within the covenant, our serving of Satan and sin might have some excuse. But whereas his covenant is a covenant of bondage, death, hell, and damnation; and God's covenant is a covenant of liberty, grace, and eternal happiness, it must needs be a sin inexcusable, to be willingly and wilfully such a covenant-breaker.

2. Let us examine concerning the vows which we have made to God in our distresses,

in our personal distresses, and our national distresses. Are we not like the children of Israel, of whom it is said, Psal. lxxviii. 34. 'When he slew them, then they sought him, and they returned and inquired early after God,' &c. 'Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth,' &c. 'For their heart was not right with him, neither were they stedfast in his covenant.' Are we not like little children, that while they are whipping, will promise any thing, but when the whipping is over, will perform nothing? Or like unto iron that is very soft and malleable while it is in the fire, but when it is taken out of the fire, returns presently to its former hardness? This was Jacob's fault: he made a vow when he was in distress, Gen. xxviii. 22. but he forgot his covenant, and God was angry with him, and chastised him in his daughter Dinah, Gen. xxxiv. 5. and in his two sons Simeon and Levi, and at last God himself was fain to call him from heaven to keep covenant; and after that time God blessed Jacob exceedingly, Gen. xxxv. 9, 10, 11, 12. We read of David, Psal. lvi. 13, 14, 15. that he professes of himself, 'That he would go to God's house, and pay the vows which his lips uttered, and his mouth had spoken when he was in trouble.' But, how few are there that imitates David in this thing.

3. Let us examine ourselves concerning this solemn league and covenant which we are to renew this day. And here I demand-

an answer to this question. Quest. Are we not covenant-breakers? Do we not make the times perilous by our falsifying of our oath and covenant with God?

In our covenant we swear to fix things.

1. "That we will endeavour to be humbled for our own sins, and for the sins of the kingdom;" but where shall we find a mourner in England for his own abominations, and for the abominations that are committed in the midst of us? It is easy to find a censurer of the sins of the land, but hard to find a true mourner for the sins of the land.

2. We swear "that we will endeavour to go before one another in the example of a real reformation." But who makes conscience of this part of the oath? What sin hast thou left, or in what one thing hast thou reformed since thou took this covenant? We read, Ezra x. 7. 'That they entered into a covenant to put away their wives and children by them,' which was a very difficult and hard duty, and yet they did it. But what bosom-sin, what beloved sin, as dear to thee as thy dear wife and children, hast thou left for God's sake since thou tookest this oath? I read, Neh. v. 13. That the people took an oath to make restitution, which was a costly duty, and yet they performed it, saith the text. But alas! where is the man that hath made restitution of his ill-gotten goods since he took this covenant? I read, 2 Chron. xv. 16. that king Asa deposed his mother Maachah, her, even from being queen, after he

had entered into covenant: and that the people, 2 Kings xi. 18. after they had sworn a covenant, brake in pieces all the altars of Baal thoroughly. But where is this thorough reformation, but little practice of a reformation. We say, we fight for a reformation, but I fear lest in a little time, we fight away our reformation. Or if we fight it not away, yet we should dispute it away. For all our religion is turned into *utrams*, into questions, in so much as there are some that call all religion into question, and in a little while will lose all religion in the crowd of questions; *inter disputandum, veritas et religio amittitur*. There was a time not many years ago, when God did bless our ministry in the city, to the conversion of many people unto God; but now there are many that study more to gain parties to themselves, than to gain souls to God. The great work of conversion is little thought on, and never so few, if any at all, converted as in these days wherein we talk so much of reformation; and is this to keep covenant with God?

3. We swear "to endeavour to amend the lives, and reform not only ourselves, but also those that are under our charge." But where is that family reformation? Indeed I read of Jacob, that when he went to perform his vow and covenant, he first reformed his family, Gen. xxxv. 3. And that Joshua resolved, and performed it, 'for himself and his family to serve the Lord.' And so did Josiah, 2 Chron. xxxiv. And oh! that

I could add, and so do we. But the wickedness committed in our families, proclaim the contrary to all the world. What noblemen, what aldermen, what merchants, families, is more reformed since the covenant, than before? We speak and contend much for a church-reformation, but how can there be a church-reformation, unless there be a family-reformation? What though the church-worship be pure, yet if the worshippers be impure, God will not accept of the worship? And if families be not reformed, how will your worshippers be pure?

4. We swear to endeavour “to bring the churches of God in the three kingdoms to the nearest uniformity in religion, confession of faith, form of church government, directory for worship, and catechising, &c. But are there not some that write against an uniformity in religion, and call it an idol? Are there not many that walk professedly contrary to this clause of the covenant! There are three texts of scripture that people keep the quite contrary way. The first is, Mat. vi. 31, 32, 34, ‘Take no thought what ye shall eat,’ &c. ‘Take no thought for to-morrow.’ And most people take thought for nothing else. The second is, Matth. vi. 33. ‘Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness,’ &c. And most people seek this last of all. The third text is, John vi. 27. ‘Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for the meat that endureth for ever,’ &c. And most people labour not for the meat that endureth

for ever, but for the meat that perisheth. As these three texts are kept so do many people keep this part of the oath; for there were never more divisions and differences in the church, never more deformity, and pleading against uniformity, than now there is.

5. We swear "to endeavour the extirpation of popery, prelacy, superstition, heresy, schism," &c. And yet notwithstanding there are some that have taken the oath, that contend earnestly for a toleration of all religions.

6. We swear "against a detestable indifferency and neutrality in this cause, which so much concerneth the glory of God," &c. And yet how many are there amongst us like unto Gallio, that care not what becomes of the cause of God, so they may have peace and quiet? That will not be the backwardest of all, and yet will be sure not to be too forward; for fear, lest if the times turn, they should be noted amongst the chief of the faction? That are very indifferent which side prevail, so they may have their trading again? That say as the politician say, That they would be careful not to come too near the heels of religion, lest it should dash out their brains: and as the king of Arragon told Beza, That he would wade no further into the sea of religion, than he could safely return to shore.

In all these six particulars, let us seriously search and try our hearts, whether we be not among the number of those that make the times perilous.

The third use is for humiliation: Let the consideration of our covenant-breaking, be a heart-breaking consideration to every one of us this day: let this be a mighty and powerful argument to humble us upon this day of humiliation.

There are five considerations that are exceedingly soul-humbling, if God bless them to us.

1. The consideration of the many commandments of God, that we have often and often broken.

2. The consideration of the breaking of Jesus Christ for our sins, how he was rent and torn for our iniquities.

3. The consideration of the breaking of the bread, and pouring out of the wine in the sacrament, which is a heart-breaking motive and help.

4. The broken condition that the kingdom of England, Scotland, and Ireland, and Germany is in at this time.

5. The many vows and covenants that we have broken; our sacrament-covenants, our fasting-covenants, our sick-bed covenants; and especially the consideration of our often breaking our national covenant, which you come this day to renew. This is a sin in folio, a sin of a high nature: and if ever God awaken our conscience in this life, a sin that will lie like a heavy *incuba* upon it. A greater sin than to sin against a commandment, or against an ordinance. A sin not only of disobedience, but of perjury; a sin of injustice, of spiritual

adultery, a sin of sacrilege, a sin of great unkindness, a sin that not only makes us disobedient, but dishonest; for we account him a dishonest man, that keeps not his word. A sin that not only every good Christian, but every good heathen doth abhor; a sin that not only brings damnation upon us, but casteth such an horrible disgrace and reproach upon God, that it cannot stand with God's honour not to be avenged of a covenant-breaker. Tertullian saith, "That when a Christian forsakes his covenant, and the colours of Christ, and turns to serve as the devil's soldier, he puts an unspeakable discredit upon God and Christ." For it is as much as if he should say, "I like the service of the devil better than the service of God." And it is just as if a soldier that hath waged war under a captain, and afterwards forsaking him, and turns to another; and after that, leaves this other captain, and turn to his former captain. This is to prefer the first captain before the second. This makes God complain, Jer. 24. 'What iniquity have your fathers found in me, that they have gone far from me?' &c. And in the eleventh verse, 'Hath any nation changed their God, which yet are no gods? But my people have changed their glory for that which doth not profit.' Basil brings in the devil insulting over Christ, and saying, "I never created nor redeemed these men, and yet they have obeyed me, and contemned thee, O Christ, even after they have covenanted

Numb. IV. O o

to be thine." And then he adds, *Equidem ego istam futuram adversus Christum gloriationem hostis, insolentem gravius longe esse statuo, quam gehennæ supplicia.* That is, "I esteem this insulting of the devil over Jesus Christ at the great day, to be more grievous to a true saint, than all the torments in hell." A saying worthy to be written in letters of gold. Seeing then that covenant-breaking is so great an abomination, the Lord give us hearts to be humbled for this great abomination this day. And this will be a notable preparation to fit you for the renewing of your covenant. For we read, that Nehemiah first called his people to fast, before he drew them unto a covenant: according to which pattern, you are here met to pray, and humble your souls for your former covenant-breaking; and then to bind yourselves anew unto the Lord our God. As wax when it is melted, will receive the impress of a seal, which it will not do before: so will your hearts, when melted into godly sorrow for our sins, receive the seal of God abidingly upon them which, they will not do when hardened in sin.

Is every man that sins against the covenant, to be accounted a covenant-breaker, and a perjured sacrilegious person?

By no means. For as every failing of a wife, doth not break covenant between her and her husband; but she is to be accounted a wife, till she, by committing adultery, break the covenant: so every miscarriage against the covenant of grace, or against this

national covenant, doth not denominate us, in a gospel account, covenant-breakers: but then God accounts us, according to his gospel, to break covenant, when we do not only sin, but commit sin against the covenant; when we do not only sin out of weakness, but out of wickedness; when we do not only fail, but fall into sin; when we forsake and renounce the covenant, when we deal treacherously in the covenant, and enter into league and covenant with those sins which we have sworn against, when we walk into anti-covenant paths, and willingly do contrary to what we swear, then are we perjured, and unjust, and sacrilegious, and guilty of all these things formerly mentioned.

The fourth use presents unto you a divine, and therefore a sure project to make the times happy; and that is, let all covenant-takers, labour to be covenant-keepers. It hath pleased God, to put it in your hearts to renew your covenant, the same God enable you to keep covenant. It is said, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 31, 32. 'The king made a covenant 'before the Lord,' &c. 'And he caused all 'that were present in Jerusalem and Benjamin to stand to it.' And 2 Kings xxiii. 3. 'The king stood by a pillar, and made a 'covenant before the Lord,' &c. 'And all 'the people stood to the covenant.' This is your duty, not only to take the covenant, but to stand to the covenant, and to stand to it against all opposition to the contrary, according as we read, 2 Chron. xv. 12, 13. 'And they

‘entered into a covenant to seek the Lord God
 ‘of their fathers,’ &c. ‘That whosoever would
 ‘not seek the Lord God of Israel, should be
 ‘put to death, whether small or great, whe-
 ‘ther man or woman.’ For it is not the
 taking, but the keeping of the covenant, that
 will make you happy. God is stiled, ‘A
 ‘God keeping covenant,’ Deut. ix. 4. Neh.
 i. 5. O that this might be the honour of
 this city! That we may say of it, London is
 a city keeping covenant with God. Great
 and many are the blessings intailed upon co-
 venant-keepers, Exod. xix. 5, 6. ‘Now
 ‘therefore if ye will obey my voice indeed,
 ‘and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a
 ‘peculiar treasure unto me, above all people:
 ‘for all the earth is mine: and ye shall be unto
 ‘me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation,’
 &c. Psal. xxv. 10. ‘All the paths of the
 ‘Lord are mercy and truth unto such as
 ‘keep his covenant,’ &c. Psal. xv. 4. There
 are three covenants, I shall persuade you in
 a special manner to stand to.

1. The covenant you made with God in
 baptism. A Christian (saith Chrysostom)
 should never step out of doors, or lie down
 in his bed, or go into his closet, but he should
 remember that word, *abrenuncio*, that is, he
 should remember the time when he did re-
 nounce the devil, and all his works. Oh
 let us not forget that which we ought always
 to remember! Let us remember to keep that
 covenant, as we ever desire God should re-
 member us in mercy at the great day.

2. The covenant we make with God in our afflictions. Famous is that passage of Pliny in one of his epistles, to one that desired rules from him how to order his life aright, I will (saith he) give you one rule, which shall be instead of a thousand; *Ut tales esse perseveremus sani, quales nos futuros esse profitemur infirmi*: That we should persevere to be such when we are well, as we promise to be when we are sick. A sentence never to be forgotten: the Lord help us to live accordingly.

3. The covenant which you are to take this day. The happiness or misery of England doth much depend upon the keeping or breaking of this covenant. If England keep it, England by keeping covenant shall stand sure, according to that text, Ezek. vii. 14. If England break it, God will break England in pieces. If England slight it, God will slight England. If England forsake it, God will forsake England, and this shall be written upon the tomb of perishing England, "Here lieth a nation that hath broken the covenant of their God." Remember what you have heard this day, that it is the brand of a reprobate to be a covenant-breaker, and it is the part of a fool to vow, and not to pay his vows. And God hath no delight in the sacrifice of fools. 'Better not to vow, than to vow and not to pay,' Eccles. v. 4, 5. It is such a high profanation of God's name, as that God cannot hold a covenant-breaker guiltless; it is perjury, injustice, spiritual adultery, sacrilege, &c. And the very lifting up of our hands this day,

(if you do not set heart and hand on work to keep covenant) will be a sufficient witness against you at the great day. We read Gen. xxxi. 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 52, 53. 'That Jacob and Laban entered in covenant, and took a heap of stones, and they called the place Mizpah, the Lord watch between me and thee,' and made them a witness, and said 'this heap is a witness,' &c. 'The God of Abraham judge betwixt us,' &c. Such is your condition this day. You enter into covenant to become the Lord's, and to be valiant for his truth, and against his enemies, and the very stones of this church shall be witness against you, if you break covenant, the name of this place may be called Mizpah. The Lord will watch over you for good, if you keep it, and for evil if you break it, and all the curses contained in the book of the covenant shall light upon a willing covenant-breaker. The Lord fasten these meditations, and soul-awakening considerations upon your hearts. The Lord give you grace to keep close to the covenant and a good conscience, which are both lost by breaking covenant.

There are four things I shall persuade you unto in pursuance of your covenant.

1. To be humbled for your own sins, and for the sins of the kingdom; and more especially, because we have not, as we ought valued the inestimable benefit of the gospel, that we have not laboured to receive Christ in our hearts, nor to walk worthy of him in our lives, which are the causes of other sins, and

transgressions so much abounding amongst us. Gospel sins are greater than legal sins, and will bring gospel curses, which are greater than legal curses. And therefore let us be humbled according to our covenant, for all our gospel abominations.

2. You must be ambitious to go before one another in an example of real reformation. You must swear vainly no more, be drunk no more, break the sabbath no more, &c. You must remember what David says, Psal. l. 16. 'But unto the wicked God saith, 'What hast thou to do to take my covenant 'in thy mouth? Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee.' To sin willingly, after we have sworn not to sin, is not only to sin against a commandment, (as I have said, but to sin against an oath, which is a double iniquity, and will procure a double damnation. And he that takes a covenant to reform, and yet continueth unreformed, his covenant will be unto him as the bitter water of jealousy was to the woman guilty of adultery, which made her belly to swell, and thigh to rot, Numb. v. 22.

3. You must be careful to reform your families, according to your covenant, and the example of Jacob and Joshua, and the godly kings fore-mentioned.

4. You must endeavour, according to your places and callings, to bring the churches of God in the three kingdoms, to the nearest conjunction, and uniformity in religion, &c. O blessed unity! how comes it to pass, that

thou art so much slighted and contemned? Was not unity one of the chief parts of Christ's prayer unto his father, when he was here upon the earth? John xvii. 21. Is not unity amongst Christians, one of the strongest arguments to persuade the world to believe in Christ? John xvii. 21. Is it not the chief desire of the holy apostles, that we 'should all speak the same 'things, and that there should be no division 'amongst us?' &c. 1 Cor. i. 10. Philip. ii. 1, 2, 3, &c. Is not unity the happiness of heaven? Is it not the happiness of a city, to be at unity with itself? 'Is it not a good and pleasant thing for brethren to dwell together in 'unity?' How comes it to pass then, that this part of the covenant is so much forgotten? The Lord mind you of it this day; and the Lord make this great and famous city, a city of holiness, and a city of unity within itself: for if unity be destroyed, purity will quickly also be destroyed. The church of God is *Una*, as well as *Sancta*; it is but one church, as well as it is a holy church. And 'Jesus Christ gave some to be apostles, &c. 'till we all come to the unity of the faith.' The government of Christ is appointed for keeping the church in unity, as well as purity. These things which God hath joined together, let no man put asunder. That government which doth not promote unity, as well as purity, is not the government of Christ. Oh, the misery of the kingdom where church divisions are nourished and fomented! a kingdom or church against itself, cannot stand.

Would it not be a sad thing, to see twelve in a family, and one of them a Presbyterian, another an Independent, another a Brownist, another an Antimonian, another an Anabaptist, another a Familist, another for Prelatical government, another a Seeker, another a Papist, and the tenth, it may be, an Atheist, and the eleventh a Jew, and the twelfth a Turk? The Lord in his due time heal our divisions, and make you his choice of instruments, according to your places, that the Lord may be one, and his name one in the three kingdoms.

Quest. But some will say, “How shall I do to get up my heart to this high pitch, that I may be a covenant-keeper?”

I will propound these three helps.

1. Labour to be always mindful of your covenant, according to that text,—‘God is always mindful of his covenant.’ It was the great sin of the people of Israel, that they were unmindful of the covenant, Neh. ix. 17. They first forgot the covenant, and afterwards did quickly forsake it. He that forgets the covenant, must needs be a covenant-breaker. Let us therefore remember it, and carry it about us as *quotidianum argumentum*, and *quotidianum munimentum*; First, Let us make a covenant a daily argument against all sin and iniquity; and when we are tempted to any sin, let us say, “I have sworn to forsake my old iniquity, and if I commit this sin, I am not only a commandment-breaker, but an oath-breaker, I am perjured. I have

sworn to reform my family, and therefore I will not suffer a wicked person to tarry in my family; I have sworn against neutrality and indifferency, and therefore I will be zealous in God's cause," &c. 2. Let us make this covenant a daily muniment and armour of defence, to beat back all the fiery darts of the devil: when any one tempts thee by promise of preferment, to do contrary to thy covenant, or threatening to ruin thee for the hearty pursuing of thy covenant, here is a ready answer, "I am sworn to do what I do, and if I do otherwise, I am a perjured wretch."

This is a wall of brass, to resist any dart that shall be shot against thee for well-doing, according to thy covenant. Famous is the story of Hannibal, which he told king Antiochus, when he required aid of him against the Romans, "When I was nine years old (saith he) my father carried me to the altar, and made me take an oath to be an irreconcilable foe to the Romans; in pursuance of this oath, I have waged war against them thirty six years. To keep this oath, I have left my country, and am come to seek aid at your hands, which if you deny, I will travel all over the world, to find out some enemies to the Roman state, *Odi odioque sum Romanis.*" If an oath did so mightily operate in Hannibal; let the oath you are to take this day, work as powerful upon you; and make your oath an argument to oppose personal-sins, and family sins, and to oppose heresy, schism, and all profaneness; and to endeavour to bring the

church of God in the three kingdoms to the nearest conjunction, uniformity, &c. And let this oath be armour-proof against all temptations to the contrary. And know this one thing, that if the covenant be not a daily argument and muniment against sin, it will become upon your breaking of it, *quotidianum testimonium et eternum opprobrium*, a daily witness against you, as the book of the law was, Deut. xxxi. 26. and an 'everlasting' shame and reproach' unto you and yours.

2. Let us have high thoughts of the covenant. Actions and affections follow our apprehensions. If thy judgment be beleapered with a corrupt opinion about the covenant, thy affections and actions will quickly be beleapered also: and therefore you ought to endeavour, according to your places that nothing be spoken, or written, that may tend to the prejudice of the covenant.

3. You must take heed of the cursed sin of self-love, which is placed in the forefront, as the cause of all the catalogue of sins here named; 'Because men are lovers of themselves therefore they are covetous,' &c. and therefore they are covenant-breakers. A self-seeker cannot but be a covenant-breaker: this is a sin you must hate as the very gates of hell.

And this is the second sin I promised in the beginning of my sermon to speak on: but the time, and your other occasions will not permit. There is a natural self-love, and a divine self-love, and a sinful self-love. This sinful self-love is, when we make ourselves

the last end of all our actions, when we so love ourselves, as to love no man but ourselves, according to the proverb, "Every man for himself," &c. When we pretend God and his glory, and the common good; but intend ourselves, and our own private gain and interest; when we serve God upon politic designs. Of this sinful love the apostle speaks, Phil. ii. 21. 'For all seek their own things, and not the things of Jesus Christ.' And if we had a window to look into the hearts of most people, we should find their hearts made up of all idolatrous self-love. All their designs are to promote themselves. They monopolize and ingross all to themselves, as if made for themselves. Where this sinful self-love dwells, there dwells no love to God, no love to thy brother, no love to church or state. This sinful self-love is the caterpillar, that destroyeth church and commonwealth. It is from this sinful self-love, that the public affairs drive on so heavily, and that church-government is not settled, and that our covenant is so much neglected. Of this sin I cannot now speak; but when God shall offer opportunity, I shall endeavour to uncase it you. In the meantime, the Lord give you grace to hate it as hell itself.

THE
FORM AND ORDER
OF THE
CORONATION
OF
CHARLES II.

KING OF SCOTLAND, ENGLAND,
FRANCE AND IRELAND.

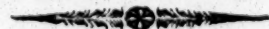
As it was acted and done at Scoon, the first day
of January, 1651.

By the Rev. Mr. ROBERT DOUGLAS,
Minister at Edinburgh, and one of the Members
of the Westminster Assembly of Divines.

1 Chron. xxix. 23. *Then Solomon sat on the throne of the
Lord as king, instead of David his father, and prospered,
and all Israel obeyed him.*

Prov. xx. 8. *A king that sitteth in the throne of judgment,
scattereth away all evil with his eyes.*

Prov. xxv. 5. *Take away the wicked from before the king,
and his throne shall be established in righteousness.*



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1799.

THE
FORM AND ORDER
OF THE
CORONATION, &c.

FIRST, The king's majesty in a prince's robe, was conducted from his bed-chamber, by the constable on his right hand, and the marshal on his left, to the chamber of presence, and there was placed in a chair, under a cloath of state, by the lord Angus, chamberlain appointed by the king for that day, and there, after a little repose, the noblemen with the commissioners of barons and burrows, entered the hall, and presented themselves before his majesty.

Thereafter the lord chancellor spoke to the king, to this purpose, "Sir, your good subjects desire, you may be crowned, as the
"righteous and lawful heir of the crown of
"this kingdom, that you would maintain religion, as it is presently professed and established, conform to the national covenant,
"league and covenant; and according to
"your declaration at Dunfermline in August
"last; also that you would be graciously
"pleased to receive them under your highnesses protection, to govern them by the
"laws of the kingdom, and to defend them
"in their rights and liberties, by your
"royal power, offering themselves in most
"humble manner to your majesty with their

“vows, to bestow land, life, and what else
“is in their power, for the maintainance of
“religion, for the safety of your majesty’s
“sacred person, and maintainance of your
“crown, which they entreat your majesty to
“accept, and pray Almighty God, that
“for many years you may happily enjoy the
“same.”

The king made this answer, “I do esteem
“the affections of my good people, more than
“the crown of many kingdoms, and shall be
“ready by God’s assistance, to bestow my
“life in their defence; wishing to live no
“longer, than I may see religion and this
“kingdom flourish in all happiness.”

Thereafter the commissioners of burrows,
and barons; and the noblemen accompanied
his majesty to the kirk of Scoon, in order and
rank, according to their quality, two and
two, the spurs being carried by the earl of
Eglinton, next the sword by the earl of Rothes,
then the sceptre by the earl of Crawford and
Lindsay, and the crown by the marquess of
Argyle, immediately before the king, then
came the king with the great constable on
his right hand, and the great marshall on
his left; his train being carried on by the
lord Erskin, the lord Montgomery, the lord
Newbattle, and the lord Machlen, four earls
eldest sons, under a canopy of crimson velvet,
supported by six earls sons, viz. the lord
Drummond, the lord Carnegie, the lord
Ramsay, the lord Johnstoun, the lord Bre-
chin, the lord Yester, and the six carriers,

supported by six noblemens sons: thus the king's majesty entered the kirk.

The kirk being fitted and prepared with a table, whereupon the honours were laid, and a chair set in a fitting place for his majesty's hearing of sermon, over against the minister, and another chair on the other side, where he sat when he received the crown, before which there was a bench, decently covered, as also seats about, for noblemen, barons and burgesles; and there being also a stage in a fixed place, erected of twenty four feet square, about four feet high from the ground, covered with carpets, with two stairs, one from the west, another to the east, upon which great stage, there was another little stage erected, some two feet high, ascending by two steps; on which the throne, or chair of state was set.

The kirk thus fittingly prepared, the king's majesty entered the same, accompanied as aforesaid; and *first* setteth himself in his chair for hearing of sermon.

All being quietly composed unto attention, Mr. Robert Douglas moderator of the commission of the General Assembly after incalling on God by prayer, preached the following sermon.

THE DUTY OF KING AND PEOPLE.

A

SERMON,

Preached at Scoon, January first, 1651. at the coronation of CHARLES the II. king of Scotland, England, France and Ireland.

2 Kings xi. 12. 17. *And he brought forth the king's son, and put the crown upon him; and gave him the testimony, and they made him king and anointed him, and they claped their hands, and said, God save the king.*

And Jehoiada made a covenant between the Lord, and the king, and the people, that they should be the Lord's people, between the king also, and the people.

IN this text of scripture, you have the solemn enthronizing of Joash, a young king, and that in a very troublesome time; for Athaliah, the mother of Ahaziah, had cruelly murdered the royal seed, and usurped the kingdom, by the space of six years. Only this young prince was preserved by Jehosheba, the sister of Ahaziah, and wife to Jehoida the high priest, being hid with her in the house of the Lord, all that time.

Good interpreters do conjecture, though Joash be called the son of Ahaziah, that he was not his son by nature, but by succession

to the crown. They say, that the race of Solomon ceased here, and the kingdom came to the posterity of Nathan the son of David, because, 2 Chron. xxii. 9. 'Tis said, 'the house of Ahaziah had no power to keep 'still the kingdom;' which they conceive to be for the want of children in that house, and because of the absurdity and unnaturalness of the fact, that Athaliah the grandmother should have cut off her son's children. I shall not stand on the matter, only I may say, if they were Ahaziah's own children, it was a most unnatural and cruel fact, for Athaliah to cut off her own posterity.

For the usurpation, there might have been two motives. *First*, It seemeth when Ahaziah went to battle, Athaliah was left to govern the kingdom, and her son Ahaziah being slain before his return, she thought the government sweet, and could not part with it, and because the royal seed stood in her way, she cruelly destroyed them, that she might reign with the greater freedom. *Secondly*, She was earnest to set up a false worship, even the worship of Baal, which she thought could not be so well done, as by cutting off the royal race, and getting the sole power in her hand, that she might do what she pleased.

The business you are about this day, is not unlike: you are to invest a young king in the throne, in a very troublesome time, and wicked men have risen up and usurped the kingdom; and put to death the late king

most unnaturally. The like motives seemed to have prevailed with them. *First*, These men by falsehood and dissimulation, have gotten power in their hands, which to them is so sweet, that they are unwilling to part with it; and because the king and his seed stood in their way, they have made away the king, and disinherited his children, that the sole power might be in their hand. *Secondly*, They have a number of damnable errors, and a false worship to set up, and intend to take away the ordinances of Christ, and government of his kirk: all this cannot be done, unless they have the sole power in their hands, and this they cannot have until the king and his posterity be cut off. But I leave this, and come to the present solemnity; there's a prince to be enthroned; good Jehoiada will have the crown put upon his head.

It may be questioned why they went about this coronation in a time of so great hazard; when Athaliah had reigned six years, had it not been better to have defeated Athaliah, and then to have crowned the king. Two reasons may be rendered, why they delay the coronation. (1.) To crown the king was a duty they were bound to. Hazard should not make men leave their duty; they did their duty, and left the success to God.

(2.) They crowned the young king, to indear the people's affections to their own native prince, and to alienate their hearts from her that had usurped the kingdom. If they had delayed (the king being known to be

preserved) it might have brought on, not only compliance with her, but also subjection to her government, by resting in it, and being content to lay aside the righteous heir of the crown.

The same is observed in our case; and many wonder, that you should crown the king in a dangerous time, when the usurpers have such power in the land, the same reasons may serve to answer for your doing. (1.) It is our necessary duty to crown the king upon all hazards, and to leave the success to God. (2.) It appeareth now it hath been too long delayed. Delay is dangerous, because of the compliance of some, and treachery of others. If it shall be delayed longer, it is to be feared, that the most part shall sit down under the shadow of the bramble, the destroying usurpers.

I come to the particular handling of the present text, and to speak from it to the present time, I have read the 12. and 17. verses, because of these two which meet together the crowning of a king, and his renewing the covenant. Amongst many particulars, which may be handled from this text, I shall confine myself to these five, 1. The crown, 'He put the crown upon his head.' 2. The testimony, 'He gave him the testimony.' 3. The anointing, 'They anointed him.' These three are in the 12th ver. As for that which is spoken of the people's joy, we shall give it a touch, when we come to the people's duty. 4. The covenant between God and

king, and the people; 'Jehoiada made a covenant between God and the king and the people, that they should be the Lord's people.' 5. The covenant between the king and the people; 'between the king also and the people,' both in the 17 ver.

First the crown is put upon his head, a crown is the most excellent badge of royal majesty. To discourse on crowns in a state way, I shall leave unto states men, and lay only these three before you of the crown.

1. In putting on of the crown, it should be well fastened, for kings crowns are oftentimes tottering, and this is a time wherein they totter. There are two things which make kings crowns to totter, great sins, and great commotions and troubles; take heed of both.

1. There are many sins upon our king and his family: sin will make the surest crown that ever men set on to totter. The sins of former kings have made this a tottering crown. I shall not insist here, seeing there hath been a solemn day of humiliation thro' the land on Thursday last, for the sins of the royal family; I wish the Lord may bless it; and desire the king may be truly humbled for his own sins, and the sins of his father's house, which have been great; beware of putting on these sins with the crown; for if you put them on, all the well-wishers to a king in the three kingdoms, will not be able to hold on the crown, and keep it from tottering, yea, from falling. Lord, take away

the controversy with the royal family, that the crown may be fastened sure upon the king's head, without falling or tottering.

2. Troubles and commotions in a kingdom, make crowns to totter. A crown at the best, and in the most calm times, is full of troubles; which if it were well weighed by men, there would not be such hunting after crowns. I read of a great man, who considering the trouble and care that accompanied the crown, said "He would not take it up at his foot, though he might have it for taking." Now, if a crown at the best, be so full of troubles, what shall one think of a crown at the worst, when there are so great commotions, wherein the crown is directly aimed at? Surely it must be a tottering crown at the least, especially when former sins have brought on these troubles. As the remedy of the former is true humiliation, and turning unto God. So the remedy of the latter, is Psal. xxi. 3. speaking of David's crown, 'Thou settest a crown of pure gold upon his head.' God set on David's crown, and therefore it was settled, notwithstanding of many troubles. Men may set on crowns, and they may throw them off again; but when God setteth them on, they will be fast. Enemies have touched the crown of our king, and cast it off in the other kingdom, and have made it totter in this kingdom. Both the king who is to be crowned, and you who are to crown him, should deal earnestly with God, to set the crown on the king's

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head, and to keep it on against all the commotions of this cruel generation. 2. A king should esteem more of the people he reigneth over, than of his crown. Kings used to be so taken up with their crowns, that they despise their people. I would have a king following Christ the King of his people, who saith of them, Isa. lxii. 3. 'Thou shalt be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God.' Christ accounteth his people, his crown and diadem; so should a king esteem the people of the Lord, over whom he ruleth, to be his crown and diadem. Take away the people, and a crown is but an empty symbol.

3. A king when he getteth the crown on his head, should think at the best, it is but a fading crown. All the crowns of kings, are but fading crowns: therefore they should have an eye upon that 'crown of glory that fadeth not away,' 1 Pet. v. 4. And upon a 'kingdom that cannot be shaken,' Heb. xii. 28. That crown and kingdom belongeth not to kings as kings, but unto believers; and a believing king hath this comfort, that when 'he hath endured a while, and been tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.'

II. The second thing in this solemnity, is, the testimony; by this is meant the law of God, so called, because it testifieth of the mind and will of God. It was commanded, Deut. xvii. 18, 19. 'When the king shall

‘fit upon the throne of his kingdom, he shall
 ‘write him a copy of this law in a book, and it
 ‘shall be with him, that he may read therein
 ‘all the days of his life.’ The king should
 have the testimony for these three main uses.

1. For his information in the ways of God, Deut. xvii. 19. This use of the king’s having ‘the book of the law,’ is expressed, ‘That
 ‘he may learn to fear the Lord his God.’ The reading of other books, may do a king good for government, but no book will teach him the way to salvation, but the book of God. Christ biddeth ‘search the scriptures; ‘for in them ye think to have eternal life, ‘and they testify of me,’ John v. 39. He is a blessed man, ‘who meditateth in the law ‘of the Lord day and night,’ Psal. i. 1, 2. King David was well acquainted herewith, as appeareth, Psal. cxix. Kings should be well exercised in scripture. It is reported of Alphonsus, king of Arragon, that he read the Bible fourteen times with glosses thereupon. I recommend to the king, to take some hours for reading the holy scriptures; it will be a good mean to make him acquainted with God’s mind, and with Christ a Saviour.

2. For his direction in government. Kings read books that may learn them to govern well, which I condemn not; but all the books a king can read, will not make him govern to please God, as this book. I know nothing that is good in government, but a king may learn it out of the book of God. For this cause, Joshua is commanded, Josh. i. 8. ‘That

‘the book of the law shall not depart out of his mouth;’ and he is commanded ‘to do according to all that is written therein.’ He should not only do himself that which is written in it, but do, and govern his people according to all that is written in it. King David knew this use of the testimony, who said, Psal. cxix. 24. ‘Thy testimonies are my **delight**, and my counsellors.’ The best counsels that ever a king getteth, are in the book of God: yea, the testimonies are the best and surest counsellors; because altho’ a king’s counsellors be never so wise and trusty, yet they use not to be so free with a king as they ought: but the scriptures will tell kings very freely, both their sins and their duty.

3. For preservation and custody. The king is *custos utriusque tabulæ*, the keeper of both tables. Not that he should take upon him the power, either to dispense the word of God, or to dispense with it: but that he should preserve the word of God, and true religion, according to the word of God, pure, entire, and uncorrupted, within his dominions, and transmit them so to posterity; and also be careful to see his subjects observe both tables, and to punish the transgressors of the same.

III. The third thing in this solemnity is, the ‘anointing of the king.’ The anointing of kings was not absolutely necessary under the Old Testament, for we read not, that all the kings of Judah and Israel were anointed. The Hebrews observe, that anointing of kings was used in three cases. 1. When the first of

a family was made king, as Saul, David, 2. When there was a question for the crown, as in case of Solomon and Adonijah. 3. When there was an interruption of the lawful succession by usurpation as in the case of Joash. There is an interruption, by the usurpation of Athaliah, therefore he is anointed. If this observation hold, as it is probable, then it was not absolutely necessary under the Old Testament; and therefore far less under the New.

Because it may be said, that in our case, there is an interruption, by usurpation, let it be considered; that the anointing under the Old Testament was typical; although all kings were not types of Christ; yet the anointing of kings, priests and prophets, was typical of Christ, and his offices; but Christ being now come, all those ceremonies cease: and therefore the anointing of kings, ought not to be used in the New Testament.

If it be said, anointing of kings hath been in use amongst Christians, not only papist but protestants, as in the kingdom of England, and our late king was anointed with oil. It may be replied, they who used it under the New Testament, took it from the Jews without warrant. It was most in use with the bishops of Rome, who to keep kings and emperors subject to themselves, did swear them to the Pope when they were anointed, (and yet the Jewish priests did never swear kings to themselves.) As for England, although the Pope was cast off, yet the subjection of

kings to bishops was still retained, for they anointed the king and swore him to the maintainance of their prelatical dignity. They are here who were witnesses at the coronation of the late king; the bishops behoved to perform that rite; and the king behoved to be sworn to them. But now by the blessing of God, popery and prelacy are removed: the bishops as limbs of Antichrist are put to the door; let the anointing of kings with oil, go to the door with them, and let them never come in again.

The anointing with material oil maketh not a king the anointed of the Lord, for he is so without it; he is the anointed of the Lord, who by divine ordinance and appointment is a king. Isa. xlv. 1. God calleth Cyrus his anointed; yet we read not that he was anointed with oil. Kings are the anointed of the Lord, because by the ordinance of the Lord, their authority is sacred and inviolable. It is enough for us to have the thing, tho' we want the ceremony, which being laid aside, I will give some observations of the thing.

1. A king being the Lord's anointed, should be thinking upon a better unction, even that spiritual unction, wherewith believers are anointed, which you have, 1 John ii 27. 'The anointing ye have received of him abideth in you.' And 2 Cor. i. 21. 'He that hath anointed us, is God, who hath also sealed us.' This anointing is not proper to kings, but common to believers, few kings are so anointed. A king should strive to be

a good Christian, and then a good king: the anointing with grace is better, than the anointing with oil. It is of more worth for a king to be the anointed of the Lord with grace, than to be the greatest monarch of the world without it.

2. This anointing may put a king in mind of the gifts, wherewith kings should be indued, for discharge of their royal calling. For anointing did signify the gifts of office. It is said of Saul, when he was anointed king; 1 Sam. x. 9. 'God gave him another heart.' And chap. xi. 6. 'The Spirit of God came upon him.' It is meant of a heart for his calling, and a spirit of ability for government. It should be our desire this day, that our king may have a spirit for his calling; as the spirit of wisdom, fortitude, justice and other princely induements.

3. This anointing may put subjects in mind of the sacred dues of the authority of a king, he should be respected as the Lord's anointed. There are diverse sorts of persons, that are enemies to the authority of kings; as 1. Anabaptists, who deny there should be kings in the New Testament, they would have no kings nor civil magistrates. 2. The late Photinians, who speak respectfully of kings and magistrates, but they take away from them their power, and the exercise of it in the administration of justice. 3. These who rise against kings in open rebellion, as Absalom and Sheba, who said, 'What have we to do with David, the son of Jesse? To

‘your tents O Israel.’ 4. They who do not rebel openly, yet they despise a king in their heart, like these sons of Belial, 1 Sam. x. 27. who said of Saul after he was anointed king, ‘Shall this man save us? And they despised him, and brought him no presents.’

1. All these meet in our present age. 1. Anabaptists, who are against the being of kings, are very rife. You may find, to our great grief, a great number of them in that army, that hath unjustly invaded the land, who have trampled upon the authority of kings.

2. These are also of the second sort, who are secretly Photinians in this point, they allow of kings in profession; but they are against the exercise of their power in the administration of justice.

3. A third sort are in open rebellion, even all that generation, which are risen up not only against the person of a king, but against kingly government.

4. There is a fourth, who profess they acknowledge a king; but despise him in their heart, saying ‘Shall this man save us?’ I wish all had David’s tenderness, whose heart did smite him, when he did but cut off the lap of Saul’s garment, that we may be far from cutting off a lap of the just power and greatness, which God hath allowed to the king, and we have bound ourselves by covenant, not to diminish.

I have gone through the three particulars contained in the 12. verse. I come to the other two in the 17. verse, which appertain

also to this days work; for our king is not only to be crowned, but to renew a covenant with God, and his people; and to make a covenant with the people. Answerable hereto, there is a twofold covenant in the words, one between God, and the king, and the people: God being the one party, the king and the people, the other; another between the king and the people, the king being the one party, and the people the other.

The covenant with God, is the fourth particular propounded, to be spoken of, the sum of this covenant, ye may find, 2 Kings xxiii. 3. in Josiah's renewing the covenant, 'to walk after the Lord, and keep his commandments and testimonies, with all the heart, and to perform the words of the covenant.' The renewing of the covenant, was after a great defection from God, and the setting up of a false worship. The king, and the people of God, bound themselves before the Lord, to set up the true worship, and to abolish the false, Scotland hath a preference in this before other nations. In time of defection, they have renewed a covenant with God, to reform all; and because the king, after a great defection in the families, is to renew the covenant, I shall mention some particulars from the league and covenant.

1. We are bound to maintain the true reformed religion, in doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, established in this kingdom, and to endeavour the reformation of religion in the other two kingdoms, ac-

according to the word of God, and the example of the best reformed kirks. By this article, the king is obliged, not only to maintain religion as it was established in Scotland, but also to endeavour the reformation of religion in his other kingdoms. The king would consider well, when it shall please God, to restore him to his government there, that he is bound to endeavour the establishment of the work of reformation there, as well as to maintain it here.

2. According to the second article, the king is bound without respect of persons, to extirpate popery, prelacy, superstition, heresy, schism, and profaneness, and whatsoever shall be found contrary to sound doctrine, and the power of godliness. And therefore popery is not to be suffered in the royal family, nor within his dominions; prelacy once plucked up by the root, is not to be permitted to take root again; all heresy and error whatsoever must be opposed by him, to the uttermost of his power; and by the covenant, the king must be far from toleration of any false religion within his dominions.

3. As the people are bound to maintain the king's person and authority, in the maintenance of the true religion, and liberties of the kingdom: so the king is bound with them, to maintain the rights and privileges of the parliament and liberties of the subjects, according to the third article.

4. We are bound to discover, and to bring unto condign punishment, all such as have

been, or shall be, incendiaries, malignants, or evil instruments, in hindering the reformation of religion; dividing the king from the people, or one of the kingdoms from another, or making any faction, or parties amongst the people. Herèby the king is bound to have an eye upon such, and neither allow of them, nor comply with them; but to concur according to his power, to have them censured and punished, as is expressed in the fourth article.

I shall sum up all in this, that a king entering in covenant with God, should do as kings did of old, when they entered in covenant; they and their people went on in the work of reformation, as appeareth here, ver. 18. 'And all the people of the land, went into the house of Baal, and brake it down,' &c. And godly Josiah, when he entered in covenant, made a thorough reformation. There is a fourfold reformation in scripture, and contained in the league and covenant. 1. A personal reformation. 2. A family reformation. 3. A reformation of judicatories. 4. A reformation of the whole land. Kings have had their hand in all the four; and therefore I recommend them to our king.

1. A personal reformation. A king should reform his own life, that he may be a pattern of godliness to others; and to this he is tied by the covenant. The godly reformers of Judah, were pious and religious men. A king should not follow Machiavel's counsel, who requireth not that a prince should be truly

religious, but faith, "That a shadow of it, and external simulation, are sufficient." A devilish counsel; and it is just with God, to bring a king to the shadow of a kingdom, who hath but the shadow of religion. We know, that dissembling kings have been punished of God; and let our king know, that no king, but a religious king, can please God. David is highly commended for godliness, Hezekiah a man eminent for piety; Josiah, a young king, commended for the tenderness of his heart, when he heard the law of the Lord read; he was much troubled before the Lord, when he heard the judgments threatened against his father's house, and his people. It is earnestly wished, that our king's heart may be tender and truly humbled before the Lord, for the sins of his father's house, and of the land; and for the many evils that are upon that family, and upon the kingdom.

2. A family reformation. The king should reform his family, after the example of godly kings. Aſa when he entered in covenant, spared not his mother's idolatry. The house of our king hath been much defiled by idolatry. The king is now in covenant, and to renew the covenant, let the royal family be reformed; and that it may be a religious family, wherein God will have pleasure, let it be purged, not only of idolatry, but of profanity and looseness, which hath abounded in it. Much hath been spoken of this matter; but little hath been done in it. Let the king and others, who have charge in that

family, think it lieth upon them, as a duty, to purge it. And if ye would have a family well purged, and constitute, take David for a pattern, in the purgation and constitution of his, Psal. ci. 'The froward heart, wicked persons, and slanderers, he will have far from him: but his eyes are upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with him.' If there be a man better than another in the land, he should be for the king, and his family: ye may extend this reformation to the court. A profane court is dangerous for a king. It hath been observed as a provoking sin in England, which hath drawn down judgment upon king and court, as appeareth this day. It is to be wished, that such were in the court, as David speaketh of in that psalm. Let the king see to it, and resolve with David, Psal. ci. 7. 'That he who worketh deceit, shall not dwell within his house: and he who telleth lies, shall not tarry in his sight.'

3. Reformation in judicatories. It should be carefully seen to, that judicatories be reformed; and that men fearing God, and hating covetousness, may be placed in them. A king in covenant, should do as Jehoshaphat did, 2 Chron. xix. 5, 6, 7. 'He set judges in the land, and said, take heed what ye do; ye judge not for men, but for the Lord, who is with you in judgment: wherefore now, let the fear of the Lord be before you,' &c.

4. The reformation of the whole land, the

king's eye should be upon it, 2 Chron. xix.
4. 'Jehoshaphat went out through the people, from Beersheba, to mount Ephraim; and brought them back to the Lord God of their fathers.' Our land hath great need of reformation; for there is a part of it, that hath scarce ever yet found the benefit of reformation, they are lying without the gospel. It will be a good work for a covenanted king, to have a care that the gospel may be preached through the whole land. Care also should be taken, that they who have the gospel may live suitably thereto. If a king would be a thorough reformer, he must be reformed himself, otherwise he will never lay reformation to heart. To make a king a good reformer, I wish him these qualifications according to the truth and in sincerity, wherewith they report Trajan the emperor to have been endued; he was, 1. Devout at home. 2. Courageous in war. 3. Just in his judicatures. 4. Prudent in all his affairs. True piety, fortitude, justice and prudence, are notable qualifications in a prince, who would reform a kingdom, and reform well.

I come now to the fifth and last particular; and that is the covenant made between the king and the people: when a king is crowned and received by the people, there is a covenant or mutual contract, between him and them, containing conditions, mutually to be observed: time will not suffer to insist upon many particulars, I shall only lay before you these three particulars. 1. It is

clear from this covenant, that a king hath not absolute power to do what he pleaseth, he is tied to conditions by virtue of a covenant. 2. It is clear from this covenant, that a people are bound to obey their king in the Lord. 3. I shall present the king with some directions, for the right government of the people who are bound to obey.

1. It is clear, that the king's power is not absolute, as kings and flattering courtiers apprehend; a king's power is a limited power by this covenant; and there is a threefold limitation of the king's power.

1. In regard of subordination. There is power above his, even God's power, whom he is obliged to obey; and to whom he must give an account of his administration, (and yesterday ye heard that text, 'by me kings reign,' Prov. viii. 15.) Kings have not only their crowns from God, but they must reign according to his will, which is clear from Rom. xiii. 5. He is called the 'Minister of God;' he is but God's servant. I need not stay upon this, kings and all others, will acknowledge this limitation.

2. In regard of laws, a king is sworn at his coronation, to rule according to the standing received laws of the kingdom. The laws he is sworn to, limit him that he cannot do against them, without a sinful breach of this covenant, between the king and the people.

3. In regard of government, the total government, is not upon a king. He hath coun-

fellors a parliament or estates in the land, who share in the burden of government. No king should have the sole government: it was never the mind of these, who received a king to rule them, to lay all government upon him, to do what he pleaseth, without controulment. There is no man able alone to govern all. The kingdom should not lay that upon one man, who may easily miscarry. The estates of the land, are bound in this contract, to bear the burden with him.

These men who have flattered kings, to take unto themselves an absolute power, to do what they please, have wronged kings and kingdoms. It had been good that kings of late, had carried themselves so, as this question of king's power, might never have come in debate; for they have been great losers thereby. Kings are very desirous to have things spoken and written, to hold up their arbitrary and unlimited power; but that way doth exceedingly wrong them. There is one, a learned man, I confess, who hath written a book for the maintainance of the absolute power of kings, called *Defensio Regia*, whereby he hath wronged himself in his reputation, and the king in his government. As for the fact in taking away the life of the late king, (whatever was God's justice in it) I do agree with him to condemn it, as a most unjust and horrid act, upon their part who did it: but when he cometh to speak of the power of kings, in giving unto them an absolute and unlimited power, urging the damp-

able maxim, *quod libet licet*, he will have a king to do what he pleaseth, *impune*, and without controlment. In this, I cannot but dissent from him.

In regard of subordination, some say, that a king is accountable to none but God. Do what he will, let God take order with it; this leadeth kings to atheism, let them do what they please, and take God in their own hand: in regard of laws, they teach nothing to kings, but tyranny: and in regard of government, they teach a king to take an arbitrary power to himself, to do what he pleaseth without controlment. How dangerous this hath been to kings, is clear by sad experience. Abuse of power and arbitrary government, hath been one of God's great controversies with our king's predecessors. God in his justice, because power hath been abused, hath thrown it out of their hands: and I may confidently say, that God's controversy with the kings of the earth, is for their arbitrary and tyrannical government.

It is good for our king to learn to be wise in time; and know that he receiveth this day a power to govern, but a power limited by contract; and these conditions he is bound by oath, to stand to. Kings are deceived, who think, that the people are ordained for the king; and not the king for the people; the scripture sheweth the contrary, Rom. xiii. 4. The king is the 'minister of God for the people's good.' God will not have a king in an arbitrary way, to encroach upon the possessions of subjects, Ezek. xlv. 7, 8. 'A

‘portion is appointed for the prince.’ And it is said, ‘My princes shall no more oppress my people; and the rest of the land, shall they give unto the house of Israel, according to their tribes.’ The king hath his distinct possessions and revenues from the people; he must not oppress, and do what he pleaseth, there must be no tyranny upon the throne.

I desire not to speak much upon this subject. Men have been very tender in meddling with the power of kings; yet seeing these days have brought forth debates concerning the power of kings, it will be necessary to be clear in this matter. Extremities would be shunned. A king should keep within the bounds of the covenant made with the people, in the exercise of his power; and subjects should keep within the bounds of this covenant, in regulating that power. Concerning the last, I shall propound these three to your consideration.

1. A king abusing his power, to the overthrow of religion, laws and liberties, which are the very fundamentals of this contract and covenant, may be controled and opposed; and if he set himself to overthrow all these by arms, then they who have power, as the estates of a land, may and ought to resist by arms: because he doth, by that opposition, break the very bonds, and overthroweth all the essentials of this contract and covenant. This may serve to justify the proceedings of this kingdom against the late king, who in an hostile way set himself to overthrow religion, parliaments, laws and liberties.

2. Every breach of covenant, wherein a king falleth, after he hath entered in covenant, doth not dissolve the bond of the covenant. Neither should subjects lay aside a king for every breach, except the breaches be such as overthrow the fundamentals of religion, and of the covenant with the people. Many examples of this may be brought from scripture. I shall give but one. King Asa entered solemnly in covenant with God, and the people, 2 Chron. xv. After that, he falleth in gross transgressions and breaches, 2 Chron. xvi. He associated himself and entered in league with Benhadad, king of Syria, an idolater; he imprisoned Hanani, the Lord's prophet, who reprov'd him, and threatened judgment against that association; and at that same time, he oppress'd some of the people: and yet, for all this, they neither laid him aside, nor accounted him an hypocrite.

3. Private persons, should be very circumspect, about that which they do in relation to the authority of kings. It is very dangerous, for private men, to meddle with the power of kings, and the suspending of them from the exercise thereof. I do ingeniously confess, that I find no example of it. The prophets taught not such doctrine to their people, nor the apostles, nor the reformed kirks. Have ever private men, pastors or professors, given into the estates of a land as their judgment, unto which they resolve to adhere, that a king should be suspended from the exercise

of his power? And if we look upon these godly pastors, who lived in king James's time, of whom one may truly say, more faithful men lived not in these last times: for they spared not to tell the king his faults, to his face: yea, some of them suffered persecution for their honesty and freedom: yet we never read nor have heard, that any of these godly pastors joined with other private men, did ever remonstrate to parliament, or estate, as their judgment, that the king should be suspended from the exercise of his royal power.

II. It is clear from this covenant, that people should obey their king in the Lord: for as the king is bound by the covenant, to make use of his power to their good; so they are bound to obey him in the Lord in the exercise of that power. About the people's duty to the king, take these four observations.

1. That the obedience of the people, is in subordination to God; for the covenant is first with God, and then with the king. If a king command any thing contrary to the will of God, in this case, Peter saith, 'it is better to obey God, than man.' There is a line drawn from God to the people, they are lowest in the line; and have magistrates inferior, and supreme above them, and God above all. When the king commandeth the people that which is lawful, and commanded by God. then he should be obeyed; because he standeth in right line under God, who hath put him in his place. But if he command that

which is unlawful, and forbidden of God, in that he should not be obeyed to do it; because he is out of his line. That a king is to be obeyed with this subordination, is evident from scripture; take one place for all, Rom. xiii. At the beginning, ye have both obedience urged to superior powers, as the ordinance of God, and damnation threatened against these who resist the lawful powers.

It is said by some, that many ministers in Scotland, would not have king JESUS, but king Charles to reign. Faithful men are wronged by such speeches. I do not understand these men. For if they think that a king and JESUS are inconsistent; then they will have no king: but I shall be far from entertaining such thoughts of them. If they think the doing a necessary duty for king Charles, is to prefer his interest to Christ's, this is also an error. Honest ministers can very well discern between the interest of Christ, and of the king. I know no minister that setteth up king Charles, with prejudice to Christ's interest.

There are three sorts of persons, who are not to be allowed in relation to the king's interest, 1. Such as have not been content to oppose a king, in an evil course, (as they might lawfully do) but contrary to covenant vows, many declarations, have cast of kings, and kingly government. These are the sectaries. 2. These who are so taken up with a king, as they prefer a king's interest, to Christ's interest; which was the sin of our

engagers. 3. They who will have no duty done to a king, for fear of prejudicing Christ's interest. These are to be allowed, who urge duty to a king, in subordination to Christ.

I shall desire that men may be real, when they make mention of Christ's interest; for these three mentioned, profess and pretend the interest of Christ. The sectaries cover their destroying of kings with Christ's interest; whereunto indeed, they have had no respect, being enemies to his kingdom. And experience hath made it undeniable. The engagers alleged they were for Christ's interest; but they misplaced it. Christ's interest should have gone before, but they drew it after the interest of a king, which evidenced their want of due respect to Christ's interest. As for the third, who delay duty for fear of preferring the king's interest to Christ's, I shall not take upon me to judge their intentions. I wish they may have charity to these, who think they may do duty to a king in subordination to Christ, yea, that they ought and should do duty, whatever men's fears be of the prejudice that may follow.

If to be against the suspending of the king from the exercise of his power, and to be for the crowning of the king, according to the public faith of the kingdoms; he first performing all that kirk and state required of him in relation to religion, and civil liberties: if this be, I say, to prefer a king to Christ, let all men that are unbiaſſed, be judges in the case. We shall well avow, that we crown

a king in subordination to God, and his interest, in subordination to Christ's, which we judge, not only agreeable to the word of God; but also, that we are bound expressly in the covenant, to maintain the king, in the preservation and defence of the true religion, and liberties of the kingdom, and not to diminish his just power and greatness.

2. That the covenant between God and the king, and the people; goeth before the covenant between the king, and the people; which sheweth, that a people's entering covenant with God, doth not lessen their obedience and allegiance to the king, but increaseth it, and maketh the obedience firmer: because we are in covenant with God, we should the more obey a covenanted king. It is a great error to think, that a covenant diminisheth obedience, it was ever thought accumulative.

And indeed true religion layeth strict ties upon men in doing of their duty, Rom. xiii.

5. 'Wherefore ye must needs be subject not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.'

A necessity to obey, is laid upon all. Many subjects obey for wrath, but the godly obey for conscience sake.

3. That a king covenanted with God, should be much respected by his subjects. They should love him. There is an inbred affection in the hearts of the people to their king. In the 12th verse, it is said, that 'the people clapped their hands for joy, and said, 'God save the king.' They had no sooner seen their native king installed in his king-

dom, but they rejoiced exceedingly, and saluted him with wishes of safety. Whatever be mens affections, or respects, this day, to our king, certainly it is a duty lying on us, both to pray for, and rejoice in his safety. The very end that God hath in giving us kings, maketh this clear, 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2. 'That we may live under them in godliness and honesty.' And therefore prayers and supplications are to be made for all kings; even for these that are not in covenant; much more for these that are in covenant. Ye are receiving this day a crowned covenanted king, pray for saving grace to him, and that God would deliver him, and us, out of the hand of these cruel enemies, and bless his government, and cause us to live a quiet and peaceable life under him in all godliness and honesty.

4. That as the king is solemnly sworn to maintain the right of the subjects against enemies, and is bound to hazard his life, and all that he hath for their defence: so the people are also bound to maintain his person and authority, and to hazard life, and all that they have, in defending him.

I shall not take the question in its full latitude, taking in what a people are bound to in pursuing of a king's right in another nation, which is not our present question. Our question is, what a people should do when a kingdom is unjustly invaded by a foreign enemy, who seeketh the overthrow of religion, king and kingdom? Surely, if men be tied to any duty to a king and kingdom, they

are tied in this case: I have two sorts of men to meet with here, who are deficient in doing this covenanted duty: 1. These who do not act against the enemy. 2. These who do act for the enemy.

1. The first I meet with, are they who act not, but lie by, to behold what will become of all: three sorts of men act not for the defence of an invaded kingdom; 1. These who withdraw themselves from public councils, as from parliament or committee of estates: this withdrawing, is not to act.

2. These act not, who upon an apprehension of the desperate state of things, do think that all is in such a condition, by the prevailing of the enemy, that there is no remedy: and therefore that it is best, to sit still; and see how things go.

3. They who do not act, upon scruple of conscience. I shall ever respect tenderness of conscience; and I wish there be no more but tenderness. If there be no more, men will strive to have their consciences well informed.

They may be supposed to scruple upon one of these grounds; 1. To act in such a cause, for the king's interest; sure I am, this was not a doubt before, but all seemed to agree to act for the king's interest, in subordination to Christ's, and this day there is no more sought. We own the king's interest only in a subordination to Christ's: or, 2. To join with such instruments as are enemies to the work of God. Our answer to the estates query, resolves, that such should not be in-

trusted: but we do not count these enemies, who profess repentance, and declare themselves solemnly to be for the cause, and the covenant, and evidence by their willingness to fight for them. If it be said their repentance is but counterfeit, we are bound to think otherwise in charity, till the contrary be seen; no man can judge of the reality of hearts: for we have now found by experience, that men who have been accounted above all exception have betrayed their trust. If any who have not yet repented of their former course shall be intrusted, we shall be sorry for it; and plainly say, that it ought not to be.

But I think there must be more in this, that men say they cannot act. For myself, I love not that word in our case; it is too frequent, he cannot act, and he cannot act. I fear there be three sorts of persons lurking under this covert. 1. Such as are pusillanimous, who have no courage to act against the enemy; the word is true of them, they cannot act, because they dare not act. 2. Such as are selfish men, serving their idol credit: he hath been a man of honour, and now he feareth there will be no credit to fight against this prevailing enemy: therefore he cannot act, and save his credit. Be who thou wilt that hast this before thee, God shall blast thy reputation. Thou shalt neither have honour nor credit, to do a right turn in God's cause. 3. Such as are compliers, who cannot act, because they have a purpose to comply. There

are, that cannot act in an army: but they can betray an army by not acting; there are, that cannot act for safety of a kingdom; but they betray it by not acting. In a word there are, who cannot join to act with those, whom they account malignants, (I speak not of declared and known malignants; but of such as have been, and are fighting, for the cause; yet by them esteemed malignants) but they can join with sectaries, open and declared enemies, to kirk and kingdom. I wish subjects, who are bound to fight for the kingdom, would lay by that phrase of not acting, which is so frequent in the mouth of compliers, and offensive to them, who would approve themselves in doing duty for indangered religion, king, and kingdom.

That men may be the more clear to act, I shall offer to your consideration some passages of scriptures, about those who do not act against a common enemy.

1. Judges v. There are many reprov'd for lying still while an enemy had invaded the land: as Reuben, with his divisions: Gilead, Dan, and Asher seeking themselves, are all reprov'd for not joining with the people of God, who were willing to jeopard their lives, against 'a mighty oppressing enemy.' But there is one passage concerning Meroz, ver. 23. Which fitteth our purpose, 'The angel of the Lord said, curse ye Meroz, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty.' What this

Meroz was, is not clear: yet all interpreters agree, that they had opportunity and power to have joined with, and helped the people of the Lord, and it is probable they were near the place of the fight. They are cursed for not coming to the help of the Lord's people. This may be applied to these in the land, who will not help the Lord against the mighty.

2. Another passage you have, Numb. xxxii. Reuben and Gad having a multitude of cattle, and having seen the land of Gilead, that it was a place for cattle, they desire of Moses, and the princes, that that land may be given them, and they may not pass over Jordan, verse 6, 7. Moses reproveth them in these words, 'Shall your brethren go to war; and shall ye sit still? Wherefore discourage ye the heart of the children of Israel?' verse 16, 17, 18. Reuben and Gad make their apology, shewing, that they have no such intention to sit still, only they desire their wives, and little ones, may stay there: they themselves promise to go over Jordan, armed before Israel, and not to return before they were possessed in the land. Then Moses said unto them, verses 20, 21, 22. 'If you do so, then this shall be your possession.' But verse 23. 'If ye do not so, behold, ye have sinned against the Lord, and be sure your sins shall find you out.'

I may apply this, to them that cannot act, will ye sit still, when the rest of your brethren are to hazard their lives against the enemy?

We have reason to reprove you. If Moses that faithful servant of God, was still jealous of Reuben and Gad, even after their apology and promise to act; for he saith, 'If ye do not so.' Have not honest and faithful servants of God, ground to be jealous of their brethren, who refuse to act? Let them apologize what they will; for their not acting, I say, they sin against the Lord, and their sins shall find them out. It will be clearly seen, upon what intention they do not act.

3. A third passage is, 1 Sam. xxiii. 26. Saul hath David inclosed, that he can hardly escape. In that very instant, there cometh a messenger to Saul, saying, verse 27. 'Haste thee, and come; for the Philistines have invaded the land.' At the hearing of this message, verse 28. 'Saul returned from pursuing after David, and went against the Philistines.' It is true, the Lord did provide for his servant David's escape, by this mean: but if ye consider Saul, he took it not so. Nothing moved him to leave this pursuit, but the condition of the land, by the invading of an enemy.

Three things might have moved Saul, to stay and pursue David. 1. He hath him now in a strait, and hath such advantage, that he might have thought, not to come readily by the like.

2. That altho' the Philistines be enemies, yet David is the most dangerous enemy; for he aimeth at no less than the crown. It were better to take conditions of the ene-

my, than to suffer David to live, and take the crown.

3. He might have said, if I leave David at this time and fight with the Philistines, and be beaten, he will get a power in his hand to undo me, and my posterity. These may seem strong motives; but Saul is not moved with any of those. The present danger, is the Philistines invading the land, and this danger is to be opposed, come of the danger from David what will. As if Saul had said, I will let David alone, I will meet with him at another time, and reckon with him: now there is no time for it, the Philistines are in the land, let us make haste against them. I wish that many of our countrymen had as great a love to their country, and as public a spirit for it as this profane king had, then there would not be so many questions for acting, as men make this day.

The objections I have been touching, are in mens thoughts and heads. 1. Some say, now the malignants are under, for this enemy is their rod. It is best to put them out of having any power: yea, there are some who would more willingly go to undo these, whom they account malignants, nor against the common enemy, who are wasting the land. If they had Saul's resolution, they would say, the Philistines are in the land, let them alone, we will reckon with them at another time; we will now go against the common enemy.

They have also the second objection, the malignants are more dangerous enemies than

the sectaries. I shall not now compare them to equal distance, and abstract from the present danger: but I shall compare them to the present posture of affairs. I am sure the sectaries having power in their hands, and a great part of the land in their possession, are far more dangerous than malignants, who have no power for the present: and therefore the resolution should be, the sectaries have invaded the land, and are destroying it, let us go against them.

3. The third observation weigheth much with many. The malignants being imployed to fight for their country, may get such power in their hands, as may hurt the cause. For answer. 1. The resolution given to the query of the estates provideth against that, for therein is a desire, that no such power should be put in their hand. 2. This fear goeth upon a supposition, that they do not repent their former course. This is an uncharitable judgment. We are bound to be more charitable of men professing repentance, for with such we have to do only. And to speak a word by the way to you, who have been in a malignant course. Little good is expected from you, I pray you be honest, and disappoint them. I wish you true repentance, which will both disappoint them, and be profitable to yourselves. 3. I desire it may be considered, whether or not, fear of a danger to come from men, if they prevail against the common enemy, being only cloathed with a capacity to fight for their country, be an argument against

rising to oppose a seen and certain danger, coming from an enemy, cloathed with power, and still prevailing. I conceive, it ought to be far from any, to hinder men to defend their country in such a case. I confess indeed, the cause which we maintain, hath met with many enemies, who have been against it, which requireth much tenderneſs; therefore men are to be admitted to truſt, with ſuch exceptions as may keep them out, who are ſtill enemies to the cauſe of God, have not profeſſed repentance, renounced their former courſes, and declared themſelves for cauſe and covenant. I doubt not, but it ſhall be found, that the admitting ſuch to fight in our cauſe as it ſtandeth, is agreeable to the word of God, and is not againſt the former public reſolutions of kirk and ſtate.

The ſecond ſort of perſons, we are to meet with, are ſuch as act for the enemy, againſt the kingdom. If they be curſed, who will not come out to help the Lord againſt the mighty: what a curſe ſhall be upon them, who help the mighty againſt the Lord, as they do who act for the enemy? Three ways is the enemy helped againſt the cauſe and people of God.

1. By keeping correſpondence with them, and giving them intelligence; there is nothing done againſt kirk or ſtate, but they have intelligence of it. A baſer way hath never been uſed in any nation. Your counſels and purpoſes, are made known to them. If there be any ſuch here (as I fear they be) let them take this to them, they are of theſe who help the

mighty against the Lord, and the curse shall stick to them.

2. By strengthening the enemies hands with questions, debates and determinations, in papers tending to the justifying of their unjust invasion. Whatever have been mens intentions in taking that way, yet the thing done by them, hath tended to the advantage of the enemy, and hath divided these, who should have been joined in the cause, to the great weakning of the power of the kingdom, and this interpretatively, is to act for the mighty against the Lord.

3. By gross compliance with the enemy, and going into them, doing all the evil offices they can, against their native kingdom. If Meroz was cursed, for not helping, shall not these perfidious covenant-breakers and treacherous dealers against a distressed land, be much more accursed, for helping and assisting a destroying enemy, so far as lieth in their power? Isa. xxxi. 3. may be truly applied to them, who are helping strangers, enemies to God, his kirk, and religion, 'Both he that helpeth, shall fall; and he that is holpen, shall fall down, and they all shall fall together.'

III. The third particular about this covenant, remains to be spoken of; *to wit*, Some directions to the king, for the right performing of his duty, whereof I shall give seven.

1. A king meeting with many difficulties in doing of duty, by reason of strong corruption within, and many temptations without: he

should be careful to seek God by prayer, for grace to overcome these impediments, and for an understanding heart to govern his people. Solomon having in his option, to ask what he would, he asked an understanding heart, to go out and in before his people; knowing, that the government of a people, was a very difficult work, and needed more than ordinary understanding. A king hath also many enemies, (as our king hath this day) and a praying king, is a prevailing king. Aša when he had to do with a mighty enemy, 2 Chron. xiv. prayed fervently, and prevailed. Jehoshaphat was invaded by a mighty enemy, 2 Chron. xx. He prayed and did prevail. Hezekiah prayed against Senacherib's huge army and prevailed, 2 Chron. xxxii.

Sir, you have many difficulties and oppositions to meet with; acquaint yourself with prayer, be instant with God, and he will fight for you. Prayers are not in much request at court; but a covenanted king, must bring them in request. I know, a king is burthened with multiplicity of affairs, and will meet with many diversions; but, Sir, you must not be diverted. Take hours, and set them apart for that exercise: men being once acquainted with your way, will not dare to divert you. Prayer to God, will make your affairs easy all the day. I read of a king, of whom his courtiers said, "He spoke oftener with God, than with men." If you be frequent in prayer, you may expect the blessing of the Most High upon yourself, and upon your government.

2. A king must be careful of the kingdom, which he hath sworn to maintain. We have had many of two private a spirit, by whom self-interest hath been preferred to the public; it becometh a king well, to be of a public spirit, to care more for the public, than his own interest, senates and states have had mottos written over the doors of their meeting-places. Over the senate house of Rome, was written, *Ne quid respublica detrimenti capiat*. I shall wish this may be written over your assembly-houses; but there is another which I would have written with it, *Ne quid ecclesia detrimenti capiat*. Be careful of both; let neither kirk nor state suffer hurt; let them go together. The best way for the standing of a kingdom, is a well constitute kirk. They deceive kings, who make them believe, that the government of the kirk; I mean presbyterial government, cannot suit with monarchy. They suit well, it being the ordinance of Christ, rendering unto God what is God's, and unto Cæsar what is Cæsar's.

Sir, kings who have a tender care of the kirk, Isa. xlix. 23. are called nursing fathers. You should be careful, that the gospel may have a free passage through the kingdom; and that the government of the kirk may be preserved entire according to your solemn engagement. The kirk hath met with many enemies, as papists, prelates, malignants, which I pass as known enemies: but there are two sorts more, who at this time should be carefully looked on.

1. Sectaries, great enemies to the kirk, and to all the ordinances of Christ, and more particularly to presbyterial government, which they have, and would have altogether destroyed. A king should set himself against these, because they are enemies, as well to the king, as to the kirk, and strive to make both fall together.

2. Erastians, more dangerous snares to kings than sectaries; because kings can look well enough to these, who are against themselves, and their power, as sectaries, who will have no king. But erastians give more power to kings, than they should have, and are great enemies to presbyterial government: for they would make kings believe, that there is no government but the civil, and derived from thence, which is a great wrong to the Son of God, who hath the government of the kirk distinct from the civil, yet no ways prejudicial to it, being spiritual, and of another nature. Christ did put the magistrate out of suspicion, that his kingdom was not prejudicial to civil government, affirming, 'My kingdom is not of this world.' This government Christ hath not committed to kings, but to the office-bearers of his house, who in regard of civil subjection, are under the civil power, as well as others; but in their spiritual administration, they are under Christ, who hath not given unto any king upon earth, the dispensation of spiritual things to his people.

Sir, You are in covenant with God, and his people, and are obliged to maintain pres-

byterial government, as well against erastians as sectaries. I know this erastian humour aboundeth at court. It may be some endeavour to make you encroach upon that, for which God hath punished your predeceffors. Be who he will that meddleth with this government to overturn it, it shall be as heavy to him, as the burthenfome stone to the enemies of the kirk. 'They are cut in pieces, 'who burden themselves with it,' Zech. xii. 3.

4. A king in covenant with the people of God, should make much of these who are in covenant with him, having in high estimation the faithful ministers of Christ, and the godly people of the land. It is rare to find kings lovers of faithful ministers, and pious people. It hath been the fault of our own kings to persecute the godly.

1. Let the king love the servants of Christ, who speak the truth. Evil kings are branded with this, that they contemned the prophets, 2 Chron. xxv. When Amaziah had taken the gods of Seir, and set them up for his gods, a prophet came to him, and reprov'd him; unto whom the king said, 'Who made thee of the king's council? forbear, lest thou be smitten.' This contempt of the prophet's warning, is a forerunner of following destruction. Be a careful hearer of God's word; take with reproof; esteem of it, as David did, Psal. cxli. 5. 'It shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break my head.' To make much of the faithful servants of Christ, will be an evidence of reality.

2. Let the king esteem well of godly professors. Let piety be in account. It is a fault very common, that pious men, because of their conscientious and strict walking, are hated by the profane, who love to live loosely: it is usual with profane men to labour to bring kings to a distaste of the godly; especially when men who have professed piety become scandalous, whereupon they are ready to judge all pious men to be like them; and take occasion to speak evil of piety: I fear at this time, when men who have been commended for piety, have fallen foully and betrayed their trust, that men will take advantage, to speak against the godly of the land; beware of this, for it is Satan's policy, to put piety out of request: let not this move any; fall who will, piety is still the same, and pious men will make conscience both of their ways and trust; remember they are precious in God's eyes, who will not suffer men to despise them, without their reward. Sir, let not your heart be from the godly in the land, whatever hath fallen out at this time: I dare affirm, there are very many really godly men, who by their prayers are supporting your throne.

4. A king should be careful whom he putteth in places of trust, as a main thing for the good of the kingdom. It is a maxim, that trust should not be put in their hands, who have oppressed the people, or have betrayed their trust. There is a passage in a story meet for this purpose: one *Septimius*

Arabinus a man famous, or rather infamous for oppression, was put out of the Senate, but re-admitted, about this time; Alexander Severus being chosen to the empire, the Senators did entertain him, with public salutations and congratulations: Severus espying Arabinus amongst the senators, cried out, *O numina! Arbinus non solum vivit, sed in senatum venit.* Ah! Arabinus not only liveth, but he is in the senate. Out of just indignation, he could not endure to see him. As all are not meet for places of trust in judicatures so all are not meet for places of trust in armies. Men should be chosen who are godly, and able for the charge.

But there are some who are not meet for trust. 1. They who are godly, but have no skill nor ability for the place. A man may be a truly godly man, who is not fit for such place; and no wrong is done to him nor to godliness, when the place is denied to him. I wonder how a godly man can take upon him a place, whereof he hath no skill. 2. They who have neither skill nor courage, are very unmeet; for if it be a place of never so great moment, faint-heartedness will make them quit it. 3. They who are both skilful and stout, yet are not honest, but perfidious and treacherous, should have no trust at all.

Of all these we have sad experience, which should not move you to make choice of profane and godless men, by whom a blessing is not to be expected, but it should move you to be wary in your choice; I am confident

such may be had, who will be faithful for religion, king and kingdom.

5. There hath been much debate about the exercise of the king's power; yet he is put in the exercise of his power, and this day put in a better capacity to exercise it by his coronation. Many are afraid that the exercise of his power, shall prove dangerous to the cause, and indeed I confess there is ground of fear, when we consider how this power hath been abused by former kings: therefore, Sir, make good use of this power, and see that you rather keep within bounds, than exceed in the exercise of it. I may very well give such a counsel; as an old counsellor gave to a king of France; he having spent many years at court, desired to retire into the country, for enjoying privacy fit for his age; and having obtained leave, the king his master required him to sit down, and write some advice of government, to leave behind him, which he out of modesty declined: the king would not be denied, but left with him pen and ink, and a sheet of paper; he being alone, after some thoughts, wrote with fair and legible characters in the head of the sheet, *modus*; in the middle of the sheet, *modus*; and in the foot of the sheet, *modus*; and wrote no more in all the paper, which he wrapped up and delivered to the king; meaning that the best counsel he could give him, was, that he should keep temper in all things. Nothing more fit for a young king, than to keep temper in all things. Take this counsel, Sir, and be

moderate in the use of your power. The best way to keep power, is moderation in the use of it.

6. The king hath many enemies, even such as are enemies to his family, and to all kingly government; and are now in the bowels of this kingdom, wasting and destroying; bestir yourself, according to vows and oaths, that are upon you, to be active for the relief of Christ's kingdom, borne down by them, in all the three kingdoms; and for the relief of this kingdom grievously oppressed by them. We shall earnestly desire that God would put that spirit upon our king, now entered upon public government, which he hath put upon the deliverers of his people from their cruel oppressors.

In speaking of the king's behaviour to enemies, one thing I cannot pass. There is much spoken of a treaty with this enemy: I am not of the judgment of some, who distinguish a treaty before invasion and after invasion, and say, treating is very lawful before invasion; because it is supposed that there is a little wrong done; but after invasion, when a kingdom is wronged, and put to infinite losses, then they say a treaty is to be shunned: but in my judgment, a treaty may be lawful after invasion, and wrongs sustained; the end of war is peace, neither should desire of revenge obstruct it, providing it besuch a treaty and peace, as is not prejudicial to religion, nor to the safety of the kingdom, nor to the undoubted right of the king, nor to the

league and covenant, whereunto we are so solemnly engaged.

But I must break off this treaty, with a story related in Plutarch. The city of Athens was in a great strait, wherein they knew not what to do; Themistocles in this strait said, he had something wherein to give his opinion, for the behoof of the state, but he thought it not fit to deliver himself publicly. Aristides a man of great trust, is appointed to hear him privately, and to make an account as he thought meet. When Aristides came to make his report to the senate; he told them, that Themistocles's advice was indeed profitable, but not honest, whereupon the people would not so much as hear it. There is much whispering of a treaty, they are not willing to speak publicly of it: hear them in private, and it may be the best advice shall be profitable, but not honest. If a treaty should be, let it be both profitable and honest, and no lover of peace will be against it.

7. Seeing the king is now upon the renewing of the covenants, it should be remembered, that we enter into covenant, according to our profession therein, with reality, sincerity and constancy, which are the qualifications of good covenanters. Many doubt of your reality in the covenant, let your sincerity and reality be evidenced by your stedfastness and constancy; for many have begun well, but have not been constant.

In the sacred history of kings, we find a note put upon kings according to their car-

riages: one of three sentences is written upon them. 1. Some kings have this written on them, 'He did evil in the sight of the Lord.' They neither begin well, nor end well; such an one was Ahaz king of Judah, and divers others in that history. 2. Others have this written on them, 'He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, but not with a perfect heart.' Such an one was Amaziah king of Judah, 2 Chron. 25. 2. He was neither sincere nor constant: when God blessed him with victory against the Edomites, he fell foully from the true worship of God, and set up the gods of Edom. 3. A third sentence is written upon the godly kings of Judah, 'He did right in the sight of the Lord, with a perfect heart.' As Aza, Hezekiah, Jehoshaphat and Josiah, they were both sincere and constant. Let us neither have the first nor the second, but the third written upon our king, 'He did right in the sight of the Lord, with a perfect heart.' Begin well, and continue constant.

Before I close, I shall seek leave to lay before our young king, two examples to beware of, and one to follow. The two warning examples, one of them is in the text, another in our own history.

The first example is of Joash. He began well, and went on in a godly reformation all the days of Jehoiada; but it is observed, 2 Chron. xxiv. 17. 'That after the days of Jehoiada, the princes of Judah came, and did obeisance to the king, and he hearken-

‘ed unto them.’ Verse 18. It appeareth, they had been lying in wait, till the death of Jehoiada; and took the opportunity to destroy the true worship of God, and set up false worship, flattering the king for that effect: for it is said, ‘They left the house of the Lord, and served groves and idols;’ and were so far from being reclaimed, by the prophet of the Lord, that was sent unto them, that they conspired against Zechariah the son of Jehoiada, who reprov’d them mildly for their idolatry, and stoned him with stones, and slew him at the king’s commandment. And verse 22. It is said, ‘Joash remembered not the kindness that Jehoiada his father had done to him, but slew his son.’

Sir, take this example for a warning. You are obliged by the covenant, to go on in the work of reformation. It may be, some great ones are waiting their time, not having opportunity to work for the present, till afterward they may make obeisance, and persuade you to destroy all, that hath been done in the work of God, these divers years. Beware of it; let no allurements or persuasion prevail with you, to fall from that, which this day you bind yourself to maintain.

Another example I give you, yet in recent memory, of your grand-father king James. He fell to be very young, in a time full of difficulties; yet there was a godly party in the land, who did put the crown upon his head. And when he came to some years, he and his people entered in a covenant with

God. He was much commended by godly and faithful men, comparing him to young Josiah, standing at the altar, renewing a covenant with God; and he himself did thank God, that he was born in a reformed kirk, better reformed than England: for they retained many popish ceremonies; yea, better reformed than Geneva; for they keep some holy-days; charging his people to be constant and promising himself to continue in that reformation, and to maintain the same. Notwithstanding of all this, he made a foul defection: he remembered not the kindness of them who had held the crown upon his head; yea, he persecuted faithful ministers for opposing that course of defection: he never rested till he had undone presbyterial government, and kirk assemblies, setting up bishops, and bringing in ceremonies, against which formerly he had given large testimony. In a word, he laid the foundation, whereupon his son our late king, did build much mischief to religion, all the days of his life.

Sir, I lay this example before you the rather, because it is so near you, that the guiltiness of the transgression lieth upon the throne and family, and it is one of the sins, for which you have professed humiliation very lately. Let it be laid to heart, take warning, requite not faithful mens kindness with persecution; yea, requite not the Lord so, who hath preserved you to this time, and is setting a crown upon your head. Requite not the Lord with apostasy and defection from a

sworn covenant: but be stedfast in the covenant, as you would give testimony of your true humiliation for the defection of these that went before you.

I have set up these two examples before you, as beacons to warn you to keep off such dangerous courses, and shall add one for imitation, which if followed, may happily bring with it the blessing of that godly man's adherence to God. The example is of Hezekiah, who did that 'which was right in the sight of the Lord,' 2 Kings xviii. 5, 6. It is said of him, 'He trusted in the Lord God of Israel, and he clave unto the Lord, and departed not from following him, but kept his commandments.' And verse 7. 'The Lord was with him, and he prospered whithersoever he went forth.'

Sir, follow this example, cleave unto the Lord, and depart not from following him, and the Lord will be with you, and prosper you, whithersoever you go. To this Lord, from whom we expect a blessing upon this day's work, be glory and praise for ever. Amen.

THE
KING'S CORONATION
AND
TAKING THE COVENANTS.

SERMON being ended, prayer was made, for a blessing upon the doctrine delivered. The king began to renew the covenants, first the National Covenant, then the Solemn League and Covenant, were distinctly read.

After the reading of these covenants, the minister prayed for grace to perform the contents of the covenants, and for faithful stedfastness in the oath of God: and then (the ministers, commissioners of the General Assembly, desired to be present, standing before the pulpit) he administered the oath unto the king; who kneeling, and lifting up his right hand, did swear in the words following.

“ I CHARLES, king of Great Britain, France and Ireland, do assure and declare, by my solemn oath, in the presence of Almighty God, the searcher of hearts, my allowance and approbation of the national covenant, and of the solemn league and covenant above written and faithfully oblige myself, to prosecute the ends thereof in my station and calling; and that I for myself and successors, shall consent and agree, to all acts of parliament enjoining the national covenant, and the solemn league and covenant, and fully esta-

blishing presbyterial government, the directory for worship, confession of faith, and catechisms in the kingdom of Scotland, as they are approved by the general assemblies of this kirk, and parliament of this kingdom; and that I shall give my royal assent, to acts and ordinances of parliament passed, or to be passed, enjoining the same in my other dominions: and that I shall observe these in my own practice and family, and shall never make opposition to any of these, or endeavour any change thereof*.”

After the king had thus solemnly sworn the national covenant, the league and covenant, and the king's oath, subjoined unto both, being drawn up in a fair parchment; the king did subscribe the same, in presence of all.

Thereafter the king ascended the stage, and sitteth down in the chair of state. Then the lords, great constable, and marshall, went to the four corners of the stage, with the lion going before them; who spoke to the people these words, “Sirs, I do present unto you the king CHARLES, the rightful and undoubted heir of the crown, and dignity of this realm: this day is by the parliament of this kingdom appointed for his coronation; and are you not willing to have him for your king, and become subject to his commandments?”

* This second coronation oath, is inserted in the 15th act of parliament, and in the parliament, Feb. 7th, 1649. and is with the first coronation oath following, insert and approved in the declaration of the General Assembly, dated July 27th, 1649.

In which action, the king's majesty stood up, shewing himself to the people, in each corner; and the people expressed their willingness, by cheerful acclamations, in these words, " God save the king, CHARLES the Second."

Thereafter the king's majesty, supported by the constable and marshall, cometh down from the stage, and sitteth down in the chair, where he heard the sermon.

The minister, accompanied with the ministers before-mentioned, cometh from the pulpit toward the king, and requireth, if he was willing to take the oath, appointed to be taken at the coronation?

The king answered, he was most willing.

Then the oath of coronation, as it is contained in the eight act of the first parliament of king James, being read by the lion, the tenor whereof followeth:

" Because that the increase of virtue, and suppressing of idolatry, craveth, that the prince and the people be of one perfect religion; which of God's mercy is now presently professed within this realm: therefore it is statuted and ordained, by our sovereign lord, my lord regent, and three estates of this present parliament: that all kings, princes, and magistrates whatsoever, holding their place, which hereafter at any time shall happen to reign, and bear rule over this realm, at the time of their coronation, and receipt of their princely authority, make their faithful promise, in the presence of the eternal God; that

enduring the whole course of their lives, they shall serve the same eternal God to the uttermost of their power, according as he hath required in his most holy word, revealed and contained in the New and Old Testaments; and according to the same words, shall maintain the true religion of Christ Jesus, the preaching of his holy word, and due and right ministration of the sacraments now received and preached within this realm. And shall abolish and gainstand all false religions, contrary to the same. And shall rule the people committed to their charge, according to the will and command of God, revealed in his foresaid word, and according to the loveable laws, and constitutions received in this realm, no ways repugnant to the said word of the eternal God; and shall procure to the uttermost of their power, to the kirk of God, and whole Christian people, true and perfect peace, in time coming. The rights and rents, with all just privileges of the crown of Scotland, to preserve and keep inviolated: neither shall they transfer, nor alienate the same. They shall forbid and repress in all estates and degrees, rise oppression, and all kind of wrong: in all judgments they shall command and procure that justice and equity be kept to all creatures, without exception, as the Lord and Father of Mercies, be merciful unto them: and out of their lands and empire they shall be careful to root out all heretics, and enemies to the true worship of God, that shall be convict by the true kirk of God, of

the foresaid crimes; and that they shall faithfully affirm the things above written by their solemn oath."

The minister tendered the oath unto the king, who kneeling, and holding up his right hand, swore in these words, "By the Eternal and Almighty God, who liveth and reigneth for ever, I shall observe and keep all that is contained in this oath."

This done, the king's majesty sat down in his chair and reposeth himself a little.

Then the king riseth from his chair, and is disrobed by the lord great chamberlain, of the princely robe, wherewith he entered the kirk, and is invested by the said chamberlain, in his royal robes.

Thereafter, the king being brought to the chair on the north-side of the kirk, supported as formerly; the sword was brought by Sir William Cockburn of Langtown, gentleman usher from the table, and delivered to lion king of arms; who giveth it to the lord great constable, who putteth the same in the king's hand, saying, Sir, "Receive this kingly sword, for the defence of the faith of Christ, and protection of his kirk, and of the true religion, as it is presently professed within this kingdom, and according to the national covenant, and league and covenant, and for executing equity and justice, and for punishment of all iniquity and injustice.

This done, the great constable receiveth the sword from the king, and girdeth the same about his side.

Thereafter, the king sitteth down in his chair, and then the spurs were put on him by the earl of Marshall.

Thereafter, Archibald marquiss of Argyle, having taken the crown in his hands, the minister prayed, to this purpose:

“ That the Lord would purge the crown from the sins and transgressions of them that did reign before him; that it might be a pure crown, that God would settle the crown upon the king’s head: and since men that set it on, were not able to settle it, that the Lord would put it on, and preserve it.” And then the said marquiss put the crown on the king’s head.

Which done, the lion king of arms, the great constable standing by him, causeth an herald, to call the whole noblemen, one by one, according to their ranks, who coming before the king, kneeling, and with their hand touching the crown on the king’s head, swore these words, “ By the Eternal and Almighty God, who liveth and reigneth for ever; I shall support thee to my uttermost.” And when they had done, then all the nobility held up their hands: and “ swore to be loyal and true subjects, and faithful to the crown.”

The earl Marshall, with the lion, going to the four corners of the stage, the lion proclaimeth the obligatory oath of the people; and the people holding up their hands all the time, did swear, “ By the Eternal and Almighty God, who liveth and reigneth for ever, we become your liege men, and truth and

faith shall bear unto you, and live and die with you against all manner of folks whatsoever, in your service, according to the national covenant, and solemn league and covenant."

Then did the earls and viscounts put on their crowns, and the lion likewise put on his.

Then did the lord chamberlain loose the sword wherewith the king was girded and drew it, and delivered it drawn into the kings hands; and the king put it into the hands of the great constable, to carry it naked before him.

Then John earl of Crawford and Lindsay took the sceptre, and put it in the king's right hand, saying, Sir, "Receive this sceptre, the sign of royal power of the kingdom, that you may govern yourself right, and defend all the Christian people committed by God to your charge, punishing the wicked, and protecting the just."

Then did the king ascend the stage, attended by the officers of the crown, and nobility, and was installed in the royal throne by Archibald marquiss of Argyle, saying, "Stand and hold fast from henceforth, the place whereof you are the lawful and righteous heir, by a long and lineal succession of your fathers, which is now delivered unto you by authority of Almighty God."

When the king was set down upon the throne, the minister spoke to him a word of exhortation as followeth.

"Sir, you are set down upon the throne in

a very difficult time, I shall therefore put you in mind of a scriptural expression of a throne.

1 Chron. xxix. 23. 'It is said, Solomon sat 'on the throne of the Lord.' Sir, you are a king, and a king in covenant with the Lord; if you would have the Lord to own you to be his king, and your throne to be his throne, I desire you may have some thoughts of this expression.

1. "It is the Lord's throne, remember you have a king above you, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, who commandeth thrones: he setteth kings on thrones, and dethroneth them at his pleasure: therefore take a word of advice; be thankful to him who hath brought you through many wanderings, to set you upon this throne. Kiss the Son lest he be angry, and learn to serve him with fear, who is terrible to the kings of the earth.

2. "Your throne is the Lord's throne, and your people the Lord's people: let not your heart be lifted up above your brethren. Deut. xvii. 20. They are your brethren, not only flesh of your flesh, but brethren by covenant with God. Let your government be refreshing unto them as the rain upon the mowen grass.

3. "Your throne is the Lord's throne; beware of making his throne a throne of iniquity: there is such a throne, Psal. xciv. 20. which frameth mischief by a law, God will not own such a throne, it hath no fellowship with him. Sir, there is too much iniquity upon the throne by your predecessors, who

framed mischief by a law, such laws as have been destructive to religion, and grievous to the Lord's people; you are on the throne, and have the sceptre, beware of touching mischievous laws therewith: but as the throne is the Lord's throne, let the laws be the Lord's laws, agreeable to his word, such as are terrible to evil doers, and comfortable to the godly, and a relief to the poor and oppressed in the land.

4. "The Lord's throne putteth you in mind, whom you should have about the throne, wicked counsellors are not for a king upon the Lord's throne; Solomon knew this, who said, Prov. xxv. 5. 'Take away the wicked from before the king, and his throne shall be established in righteousness:' and Prov. xx. 8. 'A king upon the throne scattereth away all evil with his eyes.'

5. "The Lord's throne putteth you in mind, that the judgment on the throne should be the Lord's; take the exhortation. Jer. xxii. from the beginning the prophet hath a command to go to the house of the king of Judah and say, 'Hear the word of the Lord, O king of Judah, that sittest upon the throne, thou, and thy servants and thy people, execute ye judgment and righteousness, and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressors, and do no wrong, do no violence to the stranger, the fatherless nor the widow, neither shed innocent blood in this place. For if ye do this thing indeed, then shall there enter by the gates of this house,

‘ kings sitting upon the throne of David. But
‘ if ye will not hear these words, I swear by
‘ myself, saith the Lord, that this house shall
‘ become a desolation.’ And verse 7. ‘ I will
‘ prepare destroyers against thee.’

“ Sir, destroyers are prepared for the injustice of the throne; I entreat you execute righteous judgment, if ye do it not, your house will be a desolation; but if ye do that which is right, God shall remove the destroyers; and you shall be established on your throne; and there shall yet be dignity in your house, for your servants, and for your people.

“ Lastly, If your throne be the throne of the Lord, take a word of encouragement against throne adversaries; your enemies are the enemies of the Lord’s throne: make your peace with God in Christ, and the Lord shall scatter your enemies from the throne; and he shall magnify you yet in the sight of these nations, and make the misled people submit themselves willingly to your government.

“ Sir, If you use well the Lord’s throne on which you are set, then the two words in the place cited, 1 Chron. xxix. 23. spoken of Solomon sitting on the throne of the Lord, ‘ He prospered and all Israel obeyed him,’ shall belong unto you; your people shall obey you in the Lord, and you shall prosper in the sight of the nations round about.”

Then the lord chancellor went to the four corners of the stage, the lion king of arms going before him, and proclaimed his majesty’s free pardon, to all breakers of penal statutes,

and made offer thereof: whereupon the people cried, "God save the king."

Then the king supported by the great constable, and marshall, and accompanied with the chancellor, arose from the throne, and went out at a door prepared for the purpose, to a stage; and sheweth himself to the people without, who clapped their hands, and cried with a loud voice, a long time, "God save the king."

Then the king returning, and sitting down upon the throne, delivered the sceptre to the earl of Crawford and Lindsay, to be carried before him: thereafter the lion king of arms, rehearsed the royal line of the kings, upward to Fergus the First.

Then the lion called the lords one by one, who kneeling and holding their hands betwixt the king's hands, did swear these words, "By the Eternal and Almighty God, who liveth and reigneth for ever, I do become your liege man, and truth and faith shall bear unto you, and live and die with you, against all manner of folks whatsoever, in your service, according to the national covenant, and solemn league and covenant."

And every one of them kissed the king's left cheek.

When these solemnities were ended, the minister standing before the king on his throne, pronounced this blessing:

"The Lord bless thee, and save thee; the Lord hear thee in the day of trouble; the name of the God of Jacob defend thee; the Lord send thee help from the sanctuary and strengthen thee out of Zion." Amen.

After the blessing pronounced, the minister went to the pulpit, and had the following exhortation, the king sitting still upon the throne. Ye have this day a king crowned, and entered into covenant with God, and his people; look both king and people, that ye keep this covenant; and beware of the breach of it: that ye may be the more careful to keep it, I will say a few things before you.

I remember when the solemn league and covenant was entered into by both nations, the commissioners from England being present in the East kirk of Edinburgh, a passage was cited out of Neh. v. 13. which I shall now again cite. Nehemiah requireth an oath of the nobles and people, to restore the mortgaged lands, which they promise to do; after the oath was tendered, in the 13. verse, he did shake his lap, and said, ‘ So God shake out every man from his house, and from his labour, that performeth not this promise, even thus be he shaken out and emptied. And all the congregation said, Amen.’

Since that time, many of these who were in covenant, are shaken out of it; yea, they have shaken off the covenant, and laid it aside. It is true, they are prospering this day, and think that they prosper, by laying aside the covenant; but they will be deceived. That word spoken then, shall not fall to the ground, God shall shake them out of their possession, and empty them for their perfidious breach of the covenant.

The same I say to king and nobles, and all

that are in covenant; if you break that covenant, being so solemnly sworn, all these who have touched your crown, and sworn to support it, shall not be able to hold it on; but God will shake it off, and turn you from the throne: and ye noblemen, who are assistant to the putting on of the crown, and setting the king upon the throne, if ye shall either assist, or advise the king to break the covenant, and overturn the work of God, he shall shake you out of your possessions, and empty you of all your glory.

Another passage I offer to your serious consideration, Jer. xxxiv. 8. After that Zedekiah had promised to proclaim liberty to all the Lord's people, who were servants, and entered in a covenant, he and his princes to let them go free, and according to the oath had let them go; afterwards they caused the servants to return, and brought them into subjection, verse 11. What followeth upon this breach? verse 15, 16. 'Ye were now turned, and had done right in my sight, in proclaiming liberty; but ye turned, and made them servants again.' And therefore, verses 18, 19, 20, 21. 'I will give the men who have transgressed my covenant, who have not performed the words of the covenant, which they made before me, when they cut the calf in twain, and passed between the parts thereof. I will even give them into the hands of their enemies, into the hand of them that seek their life even Zedekiah, and his princes.'

If the breach of a covenant made for the li-

berty of servants was so punished, what shall be the punishment of the breach of a covenant for religion, and the liberty of the people of God? There is nothing more terrible to kings and princes, than to be given into the hand of enemies, that seek their life: if ye would escape this judgment, let kings and princes keep their covenant made with God: your enemies who seek your life, are in the land; if ye break the covenant, it may be feared, God will give you over unto them as a prey: but if ye keep the covenant, it may be expected, God will keep you out of their hands.

Let not the place ye heard opened, be forgotten, for in it ye have an example of divine justice against Joash, and the princes, for breaking that covenant, 2 Chron. xxiv. 23. The princes who enticed to that breach, are destroyed: and in the 24. verse it is said, 'The army of the Syrians came with a small company of men, and the Lord delivered a very great host into their hand; because they had forsaken the Lord God of their fathers: so they executed judgment against Joash.' And verse 25. 'His own servants conspired against him and slew him on his bed,' &c.

The conspiracy of servants or subjects against their king, is a wicked course: but God in his righteous judgment suffereth subjects to conspire and rebel against their princes; because they rebel against God: and he suffereth subjects to break the covenant made with a king; because he breaketh the cove-

nant made with God. I may say freely, that a chief cause of the judgment upon the king's house, hath been the grandfather's breach of covenant with God; and the father's following his steps in opposing the work of God, and his kirk within these kingdoms; they broke covenant with God, and men have broken covenant with them: yea, most cruelly and perfidiously have invaded the royal family, and troden upon all princely dignity.

Be wise by their example: you are now sitting upon the throne of the kingdom, and your nobles about you. There is one above you, even Jesus, the king of Zion; and I as his servant, darenot but be free with you: I charge you, Sir, in his name, that you keep this covenant in all points; if you shall break this covenant, and come against his cause; I assure you the controversy is not ended between God and your family: but will be carried on to the further weakening, if not the overthrow of it: but if you shall keep this covenant, and befriend the kingdom of Christ, it may be from this day, God shall begin to do you good, altho' your estate be very weak, God is able to raise you, and make you reign, maugre the opposition of all your enemies: and howsoever it shall please the Lord to dispose, you shall have peace toward God, thro' Christ the Mediator.

As for you who are nobles and peers of the land, your share is great in this day of coronation, ye have come and touched the crown, and sworn to support it, ye have handled the

sword and the sceptre, and have set down the king upon his throne.

1. I charge you to keep your covenant with God; and see that ye never be moved yourselves to come against it in any head, or article thereof; and that ye give no counsel to the king to come against the doctrine, worship, government and discipline of the kirk, established in this land, as ye would eschew the judgment of covenant-breakers. If the king and ye who are engaged to support the crown, conspire together against the kingdom of Christ, both ye that do support, and he that is supported, will fall together. I press this the more, because it is a rare thing to see a king and great men for Christ. In the long catalogue of kings, which ye have heard recited this day, they will be found few who have been for Christ.

2. I charge you also, because of your many oaths to the king; that you keep them inviolable. Be faithful to him, according to your covenant. The oaths of God are upon you; if directly or indirectly, ye do any thing against his standing, God, by whom ye have sworn, will be avenged upon you, for the breach of his oath.

And now I will shut up all with one word more to you. Sir, you are the only covenanted king with God and his people in the world; many have obstructed your entry in it: now seeing the Lord hath brought you in over all these obstructions, only observe to do what is contained therein; and it shall prove an hap-

py time for you and your house. And because you are entered in times of great difficulty, wherein small strength seemeth to remain with you in the eyes of the world, for recovering your just power and greatness; therefore take the counsel which David when he was dying gave to his son Solomon, 1 Kings ii. 2, 3. 'Be strong, and shew thyself a man; 'and keep the charge of the Lord thy God: 'to walk in his ways, and keep his commandments; that thou mayest prosper in all that 'thou dost, and whithersoever thou turnest 'thyself.'

After this exhortation, the minister closed the whole action with prayer; and the xx. Psalm being sung, he dismissed the people, with the blessing.

Then did the king's majesty descend from the stage, with the crown upon his head; and receiving again the sceptre in his hand, returned with the whole train, in a solemn manner to his palace, the sword being carried before him.

The evil and danger of backsliding, defection and apostacy from the Covenants, National and Solemn League.

A

S E R M O N

PREACHED UPON

BREACH OF COVENANT,

In the Year 1663.

By the Rev. and Worthy Servant of Jesus Christ,
Mr. JOHN GUTHRIE, Minister of the gospel at
Tarbolton.

2 CHRON. xv. 12. *And they entered into a covenant to seek the Lord God of their fathers, with all their heart, and with all their soul.*

Verse 15. *And all Judah rejoiced at the oath; for they had sworn with all their heart.*——

DEUT. xxix. 14, 15. *Neither with you only do I make this covenant and this oath; but with him that standeth here with us this day before the Lord our God, and also with him that is not here with us this day.*

NEH. ix. 38. *And because of all this, we make a sure covenant, and write it, and our princes, Levites, and priests seal unto it.*

DEUT. xxix. 24, 25. *All nations shall say, wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto the land?——Because they have forsaken the covenant of the Lord God of their fathers, which he made with him.*

GLASGOW:

PRINTED BY NAPIER AND KHULL,
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1799.

TO THE
R E A D E R.

THE design of publishing this sermon, especially at this time, is to evince to the world what have been the principles of the church of Scotland, and her faithful and constant wrestlings against abjured prelacy, that bitter root of human invention, obtruded upon this church, contrary to her received reformation, and diametrically opposite to the word of God, and our covenants, both national and solemn league. The scope and design of this piece consists in these two; first, in asserting and proving from scripture, the irrevocable tie and obligation, this land lies under, to prosecute the ends and designs of these solemn sworn covenants. Secondly, In answering some objections adduced for debilitating their obligations. This sermon, by the blessing of God upon the conscientious perusal, may be a mean to discover our ancient and received principles and practices, in adhering to these covenants, even to the effusion of much blood; and also how far we are degenerated from our first love, and wonted zeal to, and apostatized from our covenant engagements, so as the sense of our covenant obligations is not only slipt out of the memories of some, but also out of the judgments of not a few. If the reader find any thing not so well connected, let it not be imputed to the author, but to the pen of him who gathered it from the author's mouth,

EZEKIEL xvii. 19.

Therefore thus saith the Lord God, As I live, surely mine oath that he hath despised, and my covenant that he hath broken, even it will I recompense upon his head.

I Conceive, in the verse that I have read, there is more solid truth delivered by the Spirit of God, which cannot lie, than I am able to declare, when I have fallen to the explication and enlargement of it. Yet the very first words, in the 11th and 12th verses, speak as much to the truth contained in the rest of this sermon of Ezekiel, as that it is not laid before the people, neither left unto them in any confused way, which is not plain; but the prophet gets a commission to shew them plainly, what the mind of the Lord was to them. This will more clearly appear, if you take notice of the former part of the chapter, wherein these things are delivered plainly to the people by a similitude, the prophet having shewed to his hearers the same things that he comes to speak plainly of unto them; so that any man might have thought this with himself, what needs so plain preaching and application? Will not any man, that hears the words, take them up without any application? You find the Lord in his commission to Ezekiel, after he points out the similitude of two eagles taking away the branches, he tells, (now says he) go to the city of Jerusalem, and say, do ye understand these things, that God will avenge his broken covenant against the king of

Jerusalem? And if they understand not these things, go and make them plain to them, and apply it to them; spare neither king nor prince, but tell them this my message; thou hast broken my covenant, therefore, by this message which I send to you, the plague and the vengeance of God shall come upon you, 'As I live, saith the Lord,' &c.

And lest any of you, who sometimes have heard us press the oath of the covenant in these lands, should now a-days think it alterable, and look upon it as a thing that may be dispensed with; therefore, we are, through God's strength, from scripture, to make out the indelible tie of the covenant: and, that we beat not upon the air, in speaking to that purpose, according to the faithfulness of the prophet's commission by the Lord, we intend to follow this rule, as we shall be answerable to our Lord and Master, and be free of your blood, whose souls are committed to our charge, to lay it before you; and if you sin against the Lord, then your blood will be upon your own head: this we intend not to speak in general, but in particular; and if any man will juggle himself against the Lord, then he will break himself for ever.

And, for making the words more clear, consider, that the king of Babylon, as you read, 2 Kings xxiv. 17. did change Mattaniah's name to Zedekiah, and made him king of Jerusalem, and afterward Zedekiah entered into covenant with the king of Babylon, that he should abide tributary to him; and for the con-

firmation of it, he puts the king Zedekiah to swear by the Lord: but after he had sent him home to Jerusalem, Zedekiah upon some supposed advantage, which he saw not at that time, did break his covenant with the king of Babylon; therefore the Lord sends the prophet to him, and says, ‘ Since thou hast broken covenant with the king of Babylon, and ‘ hast not kept it, as I live, saith the Lord, ‘ thou shalt not prosper.’ Yea, the Lord noticeth and owns it so much, that he makes the covenant sworn to the king of Babylon his covenant; and therefore says in that verse, ‘ As I live, my oath which he hath despised, ‘ and my covenant,’ &c. This is the history, and we have it clearly set down in the prophet’s commission, which he must not dare to sit, but faithfully doth deliver the same, as it is in the 33d chapter of this prophecy, verses 7, 8. wherein the prophet tells the duty of the watchmen of Israel, ‘ Son of man, I have set ‘ thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: ‘ therefore thou shalt hear the word at my ‘ mouth, and warn them from me. When I ‘ say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou ‘ shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to ‘ warn the wicked from his way, that wicked ‘ man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood ‘ will I require at thy hand;’ that is, whenever a land or kingdom is found guilty of such and such things, for which the Lord’s wrath uses to come upon a people; if that be made known to the prophets, they are bound to preach and declare it, or else resolve that the blood of all

those, that are taken away with the stroke, shall be charged on them, as unfaithful men in the house of God. And it were to be desired, that there were many to give warning; I fear there shall not the blood of a few in Scotland be required at the hands of ministers, for not giving faithful and timeous warning: for as every man that shall be taken away in his iniquity, and for his defection, shall be made to smart for it; so it shall be no excuse to you the people, that the ministers did not tell you. O but dreadful shall be the account that ministers must give for not telling the people!

In the words, there is, first, a threatening for breach of covenant. And, secondly, there is the thing for which he doth threaten; and that is, for despising the oath, and breaking the covenant of God. Thirdly, The confirmation that is fixed to the threatening. Would it not have been thought, that this was enough, 'thus saith the Lord,' I will punish thee for breaking my covenant? Now this is extraordinary, that it must have this put to it twice, 'As I live saith the Lord, shall he break my covenant and escape?' All this, put together, speaks the certainty of the threatening, verses 16th and 19th, and also the greatness of the matter, and the weightiness of it, and how the Lord looks upon breach of oaths and covenants.

The doctrine from the words, is, that the oath is indefolvable, the breach whereof God recompenseth upon the heads of those that break it. 'Tis inviolable, 'tis in the words not framed by my mouth; the Holy Ghost

framed them in the mouth of Ezekiel the prophet long ago, 'As I live, saith the Lord 'God, surely mine oath,' &c.

As applicable to our case, consider, the doctrine supposeth something that is not plainly spoken, and that is, that every oath and covenant of God, is a thing that is inviolable, that is, may not, nor cannot be broken: for the better understanding whereof, there is something that is needful to an oath and covenant of the Lord. I am not to speak here in relation to the covenant of works, between God and man in his integrity; neither am I to speak to the covenant of grace, either in the way of its dispensation on mount Sinai, or as to the fulness of it under the New Testament, tho' all these are more properly called covenants, because they are of his own devising: but we take the covenant, here in this place, to be of mens' duties in the land; and for keeping them the better, we take an oath upon us in things that are neither morally evil nor good, but indifferent: but a man once engaged by oath, cannot retract; tho' they be not commanded duties, yet once entered into, they must stand; for, when we open our mouths to the Lord, we cannot go back. But I say, for clearing this,

Consider what makes an oath and covenant of God: *First*, It must be a thing in itself lawful; there is no man that warrantably, according to the word of God, may swear the thing which in itself is unlawful. *Secondly*, It must be a thing in itself possible, within the man's

power; no man is warranted to swear that which he cannot perform. *Thirdly*, When we take the vows and oath of God upon us, we interpone the name of the Lord to it; we swear by the Lord: this is the thing here, that makes this covenant the covenant of the Lord; the king of Babylon made Zedekiah king of Jerusalem swear by the Lord. And it is more the covenant of the Lord, when the thing is religious, and the thing commanded of the Lord, which we are bound to obey, tho' we had never sworn it: therefore it must stand, once entered into, lest we make inquiry after vows, and so destroy that which is holy.

Now, for further clearing of the words, consider, *first*, that in Deut. xxiii. 21. you may see, how much the Lord counts an oath binding, 'When thou shalt vow a vow unto the Lord thy God, thou shalt not slack to pay it;' for it will be sin in thee, not to perform it: 'But if thou shalt forbear to vow, it shall be no sin in thee,' Numb. xxx. The Lord gives out laws to Moses for vows, and will have them declared, verse 2. 'If a man vow a vow unto the Lord, or swear an oath to bind his soul he shall not break his word, he shall do according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth.' The scripture is very full; so that a man once engaged in duty if he break, the vengeance of God shall be upon him.

Secondly, The inviolableness of the oath of God is founded upon the law of nature and nations. Wherefore is it that there is such an order in ordinances to swear by the name of

the Lord? Is it not for this, think you, to make the thing stand sure? For the very law of nature teaches, that if a man swear, he must swear by his God, and must keep it; and in like manner the law of nations for the matter of offensive and defensive arms, and as to the matter of cessation and peace: is not all this to hold out, that they design to secure themselves by interponing the name of God to it? Now, once allow this, that men may retract and break covenant with God, then we break the law of nature and nations too; and so there is not a nation under the sun secure, because the way of continuing peace (which is by the name of the Lord being interposed) is broken, so that neither the law of nature or nations (if it be broken) can stand; if that be granted, then it may be retracted.

The third confirmation for the truth of this doctrine; the Lord himself in his word hath declared a man's tender keeping of the covenant, vow or oath, that is exceedingly well pleasing to him; and that he has declared such a man blessed, Psal. xv. 1. compared with the last words of the 4th verse, 'Who shall dwell in the holy hill?' Would not any man think they are foolish that would not dwell in heaven? Then look through; he shall dwell, 'that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not.' A body that swears any thing, must keep it, though it be to his hurt.

The fourth thing for confirmation, of the doctrine, is to the inviolableness of the oath of God, it appears, and is established, as the

Lord hath commanded the thing in his word, and as it is founded upon the law of nature and nations, and has the promises; so the Lord has appeared an eminent revenger upon the breakers of this oath and covenant; that is to say, when folk have taken a lawful covenant upon them, and have broken it, God will appear eminently in sending plagues upon them. And for proving this, we are not here to speak of the covenant given upon mount Sinai, of which see the ten commands, how he threatens eminently to punish the breakers thereof; or for not receiving Christ offered in the gospel-covenant, without question he punisheth his people for the breach thereof: but we mean these oaths and covenants we enter into, whether they be commanded or not; yet, once being entered into, we must keep them, or else he will punish us, as is clear from these three following instances.

The first instance you have Josh. ix. compared with 2 Sam. xxi. where it will be found clearly, that the covenant being broken, by Saul, many generations after it was made, he and his house and the people must be eminently punished for the breach of it, by three years famine: for the princes, and all the people of Israel, are said to have sworn to the Gibeonites, (wherein many a black face was seen among them) now this covenant was merely civil, and the oath could not be very well warranted, but yet when it was made, it was binding.

Second instance to prove the judgments on

them, &c. Consider Jer. xxxiv. 8, &c. where you read, after the people had broken the covenant they had made with the servants, whom they had liberated, and yet brought them into bondage afterwards; that the Lord saith, since you have done so, 'I proclaim a liberty for you,' &c. that is, I shall pay you home in your own coin, I will proclaim a liberty to you for the sword, pestilence and famine.

Third instance is in that place of the text, shall he break, and shall he escape, saith the Lord? Tho' the oath was given to an usurper, and Zedekiah being his prisoner at the time, yet it was required at his hand. I shall say no more to it, but consider how covenant-breaches are reckoned among the deeds of the flesh, Rom. i. 31. 2 Tim. iii. 3. 'Without natural affection, truce-breakers, false-accusers.' And also I read of a great war betwixt the Turks and Christians; the Christians entering into covenant with the Turks, the Pope gives the Christians a dispensation to break it before the day come: upon this Uladislaus the king of Hungary came forth against Amurath; and when he came to the field, he did first beat the Turks; then Amurath, having the covenant in his bosom, took it out, and lift up his eyes, and said, "If thou crucified Christ, be a God, as the Christians profess thee to be, then take vengeance on them for this broken covenant; and for the wrongs they have done to me." And presently the Turks fell upon the Christians,

and gave them a fatal stroke and gained the day, notwithstanding the Christians had scattered them before. A most remarkable instance; this, I think, except people be more than curious will satisfy them.

From all which you may see, that the inviolableness of oaths and covenants is founded upon the law of nature and nations; and scripture and history is clear for it, that covenants cannot be broken, except folk resolve to meet with the deluge of God's wrath.

For use of this, 1. If it be so, that the oath and covenant of God, once engaged into, cannot be broken; then let no man despise the oath and covenant of God; let folk be endeavouring to secure themselves in this truth, according to the word of God.

2. If it be so, then know this, that all, who venture on the breach of it, do sin against the Lord, against precept, promises, law of nature and nations, and against threatnings.

3. Since 'tis so, that every one doth sin that makes void the covenant of God; then let all that are under that sin, expect, that the wrath and vengeance of God will be upon them, which is the second thing in the text; 'Because of my oath and covenant, which he hath despised, I will recompense it upon his own head.' Understand now what I have been saying, and what I am driving at, lest it be to you as the similitude in the preceeding verses was to this people: for I declare plainly to you, that these three kingdoms have despised the oath and covenant of God; and therefore,

according to the word of God, these three kingdoms are to expect his dreadful wrath and vengeance, if he in mercy prevent it not: let no man or woman be ignorant of these things afterward; remember I have told you that it shall be so.

But now I shall speak to some things, which folk may have for excusing themselves about the solemn league and covenant; and for understanding of them, consider, the parliament of Scotland, England, and Ireland, entered into a covenant for maintaining the word of God and the purity thereof, and putting away profanities; and engaged themselves against schism, heresy, error, popery and prelacy: and there was an oath of God taken for this end upon us; and our king took it at his coronation; this oath again is broken by our king and parliament and is despised: for which, according to the word of God, wrath will be upon the heads of these that have broken it, if God do not mercifully prevent it.

Now there are many that have many excuses and many objections about this solemn league and covenant; I shall therefore speak to some of them, and I take you to record this day, I intend not to preach rebellion against king or parliament, but according to the word of God; and if it be rebellion, we must take our hazard of it.

Object. 1. We are not bound to a covenant and oath which is not lawful, &c. but this is such: *Ergo. Prob. Minor.* Because it wanted the consent of the king the supreme magis-

trate: *Ergo*.—I dare say, many of you have this objection, which have no ground for it; butto strengthen your argument, look Numb. xxx. compare third and fifth verses: the argument runs thus; the subjects of a land taking upon them to covenant with God, they can do no more in it than a woman in her father's house, &c. but so is it with these lands: for seeing the king, who is supreme, did disallow it, therefore it is not binding.

Answer I. The place alledged doth not speak directly to the thing; for tho' the king be a civil parent, he is not a natural parent.

II. This place cannot be alledged to prove the thing; for the matter is only spoken of a woman in her father's house, or subject to her husband, &c. It is true that a parent or husband may disannul her vows, being made without his consent, anent these things, wherein she is subject to her parent, or to her husband; but that place doth speak nothing of annulling the man's vow or the widow's, as verse 2. for their vows must stand.

III. God makes no exception here, but this one; and therefore it must stand. Will any of you who has this argument say, that the king's taking or not taking the covenant made the covenant lawful or unlawful? Yet tho' the king was not consenting to it, (which I will not grant, for there was at that time a power for it; I will not take upon me to dispute the power that parliaments have without a king, 'tis far above my hand, yet I say,) the parliament has power to put folk to duty, nill they, will they.

IV. For making the covenant valid and lawful, something may be added to it afterward, tho' not at the present time, (yet seeing it is afterwards added, it is enough) but so was it with our covenant; there was a frequent consent given to it by our king, and also it was subscribed by him, which is sufficient to make our vows stand. Numb. xxx. we see, if a husband or parent held their peace, when they heard a woman vow, the vow did stand; much more if the husband or parent take the vow upon themselves. I know no shadow imaginable of excuse for them; the word of God, which stands sure, makes against them: and since it is so, our king and parliament cannot retract what they have done.

Object. 2. Some will say, there is no man but knows that the king has taken the covenant, for it was not done in a corner; but he may break, because he was forced to it, and he was not absolutely free.

Ans. I. We did not hear tell of this before now; if any man would have said, at that time, that he was constrained to take it, he would be counted a very uncharitable constructor.

II. Suppose that he was not free, which I will never grant, and suppose he was forced to the oath, yet scripture makes it out, that a man swearing, tho' he was not free, must stand to it; tho' it was not a spontaneous act, yet it was a most voluntary act. Again, consider this in Zedekiah, he was a captive, to whom? To a heathen: (now no man will say

a captive is a free man, and a liberate man) yet he swearing to the king of Babylon a heathen, and breaking his oath afterwards, God's vengeance came upon him; for there is no dallying with God in these matters: for all caufults say, if a man swear to a robber, to give him so much to spare his life, he must keep his oath, if it be in his power, though it be to his hurt. I shall say no more on this; but I am hopeful, if you will receive the word in love, ye shall have wherewith to answer your adversaries in the gate.

Object. 3d. The solemn league and covenant must be broken, because we are not bound to keep with them that broke to us first: but it is so betwixt us and England.

Ergo—

Ans. Is there not many make this objection, which, I dare say, never read the covenant: thou poor blind creature, how dare thou speak of it? These that will say so, it seems, they never understood the league and covenant, because it is not a bargain betwixt two parties on earth, the one whereof breaking the other is free; but these three lands is one party, and the God of heaven is the other party; therefore tho' England should break, should Scotland break also the covenant? It is not after this tenor; we will endeavour reformation in these lands, but if you break, we will break also: no, it is each man swearing for himself, that he shall in his place and station, endeavour reformation; so that if it were left all to one man, he must endeavour reforma-

tion. For, consider the last words of the article, each of them for themselves did lift up their hands to the Most High; and so these three lands are one party and the other party is the God of heaven. Consider seriously upon it; for it is the thing you must either suffer for, or sin, ere it be long without remedy. Whatever England and Ireland have done in breaking the covenant, we say, they justly must smart for it, according to the word of God, if God in mercy prevent it not: nevertheless, as long as there is in these lands any who keep the covenant, we are bound to keep it; and suppose there are many who had rather suffer for it than sin, as witness the many scattered flocks and shepherds in these lands; and supposing this were not, though both England and Ireland should quite it, yet Scotland is bound to it.

Object. 4th. We swear in the league and covenant to that which is impossible, and therefore it cannot be kept.

Ans. If all these three kingdoms, who have taken the oath upon them, would sincerely stand to it, I hope there should be no need to stand out against it. The objection is in this, we have sworn to reform England. Now, for answer, we are not sworn to reform England, neither is England sworn to reform Scotland; but that which is sworn is this, each of them are to endeavour in their places and callings, the reformation of religion in doctrine, worship, discipline and government, in these lands, and to reform England, according to the word

of God, and the best reformed churches: for tho' we had never sworn an oath, we are bound to promote the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. So that the objection is rather out of malice against the word of God, than any conscionable principle. He is not worth the name of a Christian, that condemns this, for it is contrary to the petition, 'Thy kingdom come:' so that we should study all kingdoms reformation, that they may become the kingdoms of our Lord. If the king and parliament were studying to reform, as much as they are studying to deface and deform, there should be no need of this objection.

Object. 5th. The covenant, which these kingdoms entered into, as to their own reformation, and as to the reformation of all the rest, it was too rashly and inconsiderately gone about.

Ans. I. I question, if any of you, who moves the objection, knows what consideration is; was there not deliberation, when there was protestants and remonstrators for the poor lands? And at last they came to this with it, to enter into covenant: wherefore, it seems, it was not indeliberate.

II. There was more deliberation in it, than many other oaths in scripture, and yet they did stand; as Judges xi. 35. the vow of Jephthah when he met his daughter, who will deny but that was a rash oath, to vow whatsoever came out of his door first, he should offer it up to the God of heaven? And yet it did bind him, while he says, 'Alas, my daughter, thou

‘hast brought me very low!’ And might not his daughter have said, father, it is but a rash vow, break it? Nay, says he, ‘I have opened my mouth unto the Lord, and I cannot go back.’

III. To confirm it more, what would you think of a covenant made between the people of the Lord and heathens, and no counsel sought from the Lord? Josh. ix. The covenant is made there between the people of Israel and the Gibeonites; there you will see a vow very rashly taken, yea, not so much as to seek counsel from the Lord; and Israel made peace with them, ‘The princes of the congregation sware unto them.’ Now, I hope none of you will deny, but God’s counsel was sought to our covenants, which was not sought in that covenant; and yet, for the breach of it, all the land did smart, as you may see, 2 Sam. xxi. Therefore, I conclude, tho’ a covenant be entered into rashly, and want many things for making it complete, yet opening the mouth to the Lord, we cannot go back, or else we must expect the wrath and vengeance of God.

Object. 6th. The covenant cannot be binding, because the parties dealt craftily with us.

Ans. I. England is not our party that we covenanted with; but all the three lands together, as one party, and God the other party with whom they covenanted.

II. Consider, Josh. ix. and you will find how little weight this objection hath in matter of covenanting. It is said, in the fourth

verse, 'They did work wilily, and went as if they had been ambassadors;' yet Joshua and the princes entered into covenant with them; and when it was broken, the land of Israel did smart for it.

Object. 7th. The covenant binds us to things that are not particularly set down, but are so general as keep us in doubt; the ground whereof is this, because we swear in general to endeavour the reformation of England according to the best reformed churches: but these churches were not particularly set down, and pitched upon; therefore it cannot stand.

Ans. I. If there be any man, that would have a more particular rule, than the word of God for reformation, he must be sent to another land to seek another gospel from Jews or Turks; and if it be so, then there is not a rule among us.

II. Comparing one part of the covenant with another, 'tis most particularly set down and determined; as (first) The covenant is clear, the reformation must not be popery. (Secondly,) The bishops, prelates, archbishops, deans, chapters, curates, &c. I say, the covenant is clear in chief, if it lays aside all these things, what, I pray you, remains in debate then? I know nothing, except you make it either a presbyterial or independent covenant, and, at that time, independency was to be brought to presbytery; now, since they pass by all these things, I hope the matter is not left in the dark, as some think it is.

Object. 8th. Supposing the covenant binds

the land, yet it binds none but those that took it.

Ans. Now I perceive, there are many of you young and ranting blades, that think yourselves happy youths, because ye never took the covenant; but I have a word to speak to such from the scriptures, and therefore take it with you: wherever a king and the princes of a land take a covenant, the rest of the land are bound to it, as you may see in that covenant with the Gibeonites: the people there did not swear, yea, they murmured against the oath; but tho' the people did not swear, yet the princes say, 'We have sworn to the Lord, we cannot touch them.' Therefore do not beguile yourselves, ye stand as surely engaged to it, as I or he, who did subscribe it with our hands: therefore the breach of it shall be required at your hands, be you young or old, men or women; and therefore remember the ix. of Joshua, 'The children of Israel did not smite them, because the princes had sworn the oath.' Might not the people have said, let them keep it, who did swear it? But it is not so; for they say, 'We have all sworn it, therefore we must not touch them.'

Object. 9th. Suppose it binds this generation, yet it cannot bind our posterity.

Ans. This same generation that did swear it, hath broken it, and I fear the same generation shall be punished for it. Secondly, The covenant doth directly bind all following generations, "That our children after us be found walking in faith and love, that the Lord

may dwell among us;" these are the very words of the covenant. For what end were these words put in? Was it not to bind our posterity, and to keep conformity and unity, and to bind them to the word of God? But you'll say, there is no mention of the posterity. *Ans.* There was no mention made of the posterity of Israel, when the people of Israel made that covenant with the Gibeonites, neither was there mention made of the Gibeonites posterity; yet you may see the covenant binding to their posterity, as is clear, Josh. ix. compared with 2 Sam. xxi. So then you must understand, that the covenant is absolute; therefore I conclude, that as sure as sun and moon endures in the firmament, if there be any generation in these three lands, God will require the breach of his covenant at their hands, and his vengeance shall be upon them, if they repent not.

Object. 10th. The king and estates of the land found hurt in keeping it. *Ans.* Ay, but read Psal. xv. 1, 4. 'He that sweareth to his hurt, and changeth not.'

Object. 11th. There will be eminent advantages by the breaking of it, *Ergo. Ans.* For myself, I do not understand any advantage to these three lands comparable to the solemn league; this is my judgment: but, will you consider the covenant, betwixt Joshua and the Gibeonites, it was a covenant contrary to God's command, yet his name being taken in it, could not be retracted; they dealt wilily with him, and they sought no counsel from

the Lord, and they were suspecting it in the mean time, and they knew it within three days afterward; yet because of the breach of it, tho' it was broken out of zeal to the children of Israel, yet the people did smart for it by three years famine; and when it was broken, it was not the same generation that broke it. I believe, and set all the three kingdoms wit together, they will not get as many excuses for the breaches of the covenant of our kingdom, as Zedekiah had for his covenant: for first, his was contrary to God and his people; for he had promised to the people within seventy years to be delivered; now the covenant was, to keep them in captivity, and to keep the kingdom in subjection. Secondly, He was a captive, and so forced to it. Thirdly, The covenant was made with a heathenish king, it was the direct intent of the covenant to make the kingdom base, as it is in the 14th verse, that it might not lift up itself. Now, what could have been a greater excuse to have broken the covenant, than for him to have said, I cannot keep this covenant, because I will prove false to my people; for I was a captive when he made me swear? &c. Therefore might he say, I will break it: but saith God, it is my covenant, therefore I will recompense it upon his own head. And therefore I conclude, that whoever enters into covenant, be what he will, especially when he is commanded, he must keep it: for he that breaks it, God's vengeance shall be upon him. Now, seeing it is so, we are to expect, he will

avenge his broken covenant upon these lands, according to his word.

Now the next thing in the text, is, that the breakers of covenant with God, God will recompence it upon their own heads; this is the words of the text, 'My oath that he hath despised,' &c. Now, to clear it to you, who they are that are despisers of the covenant; consider, first, that it is a covenant in opinion, and not in practice; that is to say, there is not a man that reforms not in his heart, according to the covenant, but he is a breaker of the same; for this is the articles of the covenant. Therefore know assuredly, O ye drunkards, adulterers, despisers of ordinances, and the people of God, sabbath-breakers, covetous persons and civilians, who care for no more than an outward profession; if ye be not endeavouring reformation, and to keep the covenant, God's vengeance shall be upon you. Indeed we will hear many folk, who pretend to keep the covenant, but they will let an oath flee when they like: thou by so doing, art a good keeper of the covenant indeed; thou art guilty before God, for thou never covenanted in heart and affection.

Secondly, All those despise the covenant, that care not for it; for there is no indifference here: therefore all the three kingdoms may expect wrath from the Lord, except they repent.

Thirdly, These are despisers of the covenant, who are fathers of lies and seditions, and find out shifts to shun it; but whoever they

be that are seeking wiles to be freed of the covenant, whether king or parliament, God will send vengeance on them. We are not here to preach rebellion or treason, but what we shall warrant from the Lord's word. Zedekiah was a king, and yet you find vengeance came upon him; and so did it upon Saul's house and posterity, for his breach of covenant; therefore let all take heed to it.

But, what would ye have us to do, say ye? *First*, Consider what case these lands stand in; and what it is they lie under: Is it not the breach of covenant? and the judgment of God will come upon them, if he in mercy prevent it not: because we have sworn the covenant, and broken it; therefore God hath sworn, That we shall not prosper. O! is there none among the tribes of Israel, to lament these things this day, this sad condition of these three lands, that they are guilty of breach of covenant, and are under the threatning of most severe judgments? Will you then bewail it, if you have any tenderness of heart, each man for himself, and for his family? I know some folk will say, Let it even be so, for we will never lift it up again; but of this afterward. Now I would intreat you to beware of partaking of other mens sins, lest ye partake of their plagues and judgments: wilt thou vote with the king in parliament to sin? then thou must vote for judgments. And I shall only say this, endeavour to cover yourselves now, with that which you would cover yourselves with at the day of judgment.

There will never a man come in and say, The king must answer for me; No, no, the king must answer for himself. If you be not studying to keep these things, the covering will be too narrow for you that day. Again, I would advise you to lay your thoughts aside from getting much of the world; but see if ye can get this that is in Rev. iii. 4. 'Thou hast a few names, even in Sardis, which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy.' It was a time then of great defection; and these of them that continued stedfast, were as signs and wonders. O then, walk now, as you would desire to walk afterward! for surely these that lie down with sin unpardoned in the grave, must resolve to lie in an eternal bed of sorrow; and these that keep themselves clean, shall walk with the Lamb in white.

Now, a word to that which I mentioned before. What shall we do, since these lands have broken covenant with God? I tell you, that Scotland is bound to keep it, altho' England and Ireland have broken it; and altho' Scotland broke, yet Ireland and England are bound to stand to it. Hosea iv. 15. 'Thou Israel play the harlot, yet let not Judah offend;' viz. As for you at this present time, tho' England and Ireland have broken, yet let not Scotland do so too. Suppose there were but one family in these lands that would stand to it, and if all that family should turn their back upon it except one person; truly that

person is bound to stand to it, Josh. xxiv. 15. 'Choose you whom you will serve; but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.' Here is but a family; so that, if all the kingdom should forswear the covenant, yet so long as I am master of a family, I must serve the Lord; I must not serve other gods, that is to say, we should not serve popes nor prelates, &c.

But what if it come to this, That there be no man to bide by it at all, but one man? That man is bound to keep it according to scripture. Read 1 Kings xix. 14. 'I have been very jealous,' &c. from which I conclude, according to the scriptures, tho' England has forsaken, yet Scotland is bound; and tho' Scotland should forsake, yet England is bound; and tho' both forsake, yet one family is bound to stand to it. Therefore study to know your duty, lest the wrath of God come upon you and your posterity: believe these things; for our king and princes, nobles and ministers, and all the people, and our posterity, are bound to it: So I leave it to you, with this word, happy is that man that shall be steadfast in the covenant, tho' all the rest should forsake it. But as to the persons, who they are that shall continue steadfast, God has reserved that to himself as a piece of his sovereignty. Again, we hear not tell of a public covenant ever sworn and broken, but God visibly plagued the breakers thereof. There is no sin God would have folk laying more to heart, than the breach of covenant: 'As I live, saith the Lord, surely mine oath that he hath de-

‘spised, and my covenant he hath broken, even it will I recompence upon his own head.’ God useth not to trust folk long, that break covenant, without some visible stroke; as it was in Saul’s days and Zedekiah’s. If you would have a mark upon your foreheads, and be kept free from these things, be sighing for the abominations of these lands, Ezek. ix. Wo to the man that’s rejoicing at this day. Is there no family found sighing for these things? if not, all the world shall hear tell of their punishment. This we recommend to you; and do not say, that we did not give you warning: for we have told you this from the word of the Lord, therefore receive it in love.

As for myself, I know not what I may do; yet, though I should shrink from the faith by my weakness, which God forbid, I oft-times remember the words of Nehemiah and Jeremiah, when they did testify against the people’s sins; and I do protest against the breach of covenant, that I may be not made accessory to other folk’s sins, and lest I be found guilty before the Lord, and be made partaker of other mens judgments. This is the way, that the prophets did use; this is no rebellion or treason: for if they think it rebellion or treason, and think it censurable I commit them to the prophets who are gone to their place, who did these things; and first punish them, and then me. I commit all these things to you: Lord, engrave them on your hearts, Amen.

King JAMES VI. his charge to all Commissioners and Ministers within the realm, concerning the National Covenant.

SEEING that we and our household have subscribed and given this public confession of our faith, to the good example of our subjects: we command and charge all commissioners and ministers, to crave the same confession of their parishioners, and proceed against the refusers, according to our laws and order of the kirk, delivering their names and lawful process to the ministers of our house with all haste and diligence, under the pain of forty pounds to be taken from their stipend, that we, with the advice of our council, may take order with such proud contemners of God and our laws.

Subscribed with our hand at Holyrood-house, 1580. the 2d day of March, the 14th year of our reign.

King CHARLES I. his declaration, concerning the Solemn League and Covenant.

AS things now stand, good men shall least offend God and me, by keeping their covenant in honest and lawful ways; since I have the charity to think, that the chief end of the covenant in such mens intentions, was to preserve religion in purity, and the kingdom in peace.

King CHARLES II. his declaration, to all his subjects of the Kingdoms of Scotland, England, and Ireland, concerning the Covenants and Work of Reformation.

HIS majesty taking in consideration, that merciful dispensation of divine providence, by which he hath been recovered out of the snare of evil counsel; and having attained so full perswasion and confidence of the loyalty of his people in Scotland, with whom he hath too long stood at a distance; and of the righteousness of their cause, as to join in one covenant with them, and to cast himself and his interests wholly upon God; and in all matters civil, to follow the advice of his parliament, and such as shall be entrusted by them; and in all matters ecclesiastic, the advice of the General Assembly, and their commissioners; and being sensible of his duty to God, and desirous to approve himself to the consciences of all his good subjects, and to stop the mouths of his and their enemies and traducers, doth in reference to his former deportments, and as to his resolutions for the future, declare as follows:

Tho' his majesty as a dutiful son be obliged to honour the memory of his royal father, and have in estimation the person of his mother; yet doth he desire to be deeply humbled and afflicted in spirit before God, because of his father's hearkening to, and

following evil counsels, and his opposition to the work of reformation, and to the solemn league and covenant, by which so much of the blood of the Lord's people hath been shed in these kingdoms; and for the idolatry of his mother, the toleration whereof in the king's house, as it was matter of great stumbling to all the protestant churches; so could it not but be an high provocation against him, who is a jealous God, visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children: and albeit, his majesty might extenuate his former carriages and actions, in following of the advice, and walking in the way of those who are opposite to the covenant, and to the work of God, and might excuse his delaying to give satisfaction to the just and necessary desires of the kirk and kingdom of Scotland, from his education, and age, and evil counsel, and company, and from the strange and insolent proceedings of sectaries against his royal father, and in reference to religion, and the ancient government of the kingdom of England, to which he hath the undoubted right of succession; yet knowing, that he hath to do with God, he doth ingeniously acknowledge all his own sins, and all the sins of his Father's house, craving pardon, and hoping for mercy and reconciliation, through the blood of Jesus Christ. And as he doth value the constant addresses that were made by his people to the throne of grace on his behalf, when he stood in opposition to the work of God, as a singular testimony of long-suffering patience and mer-

cy upon the Lord's part, and loyalty, upon theirs; so doth he hope, and shall take it as one of the greatest tokens of their love and affection to him and to his government, that they will continue in prayer and supplication to God for him; that the Lord who spared and preserved him to this day, notwithstanding of all his own guiltiness, may be at peace with him, and give him to fear the Lord his God, and to serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind all the days of his life.

And his majesty having upon full persuation of the justice and equity of all the heads and articles thereof, now sworn and subscribed the national covenant of the kingdom of Scotland, and the solemn league and covenant of the three kingdoms of Scotland, England and Ireland, doth declare, that he hath not sworn and subscribed these covenants, and entered into the oath of God with his people, upon any sinister intention and crooked design for attaining his own ends, but so far as human weakness will permit, in the truth and sincerity of his heart, and that he is firmly resolved in the Lord's strength to adhere thereto, and to prosecute to the utmost of his power all the ends thereof, in his station and calling, really, constantly and sincerely all the days of his life: in order to which he doth in the first place profess and declare, that he will have no enemies, but the enemies of the covenant, and that he will have no friends, but the friends of the covenant. And therefore as he doth now detest and abhor all po-

pery, superstition and idolatry, together with prelacy and all errors, heresy, schism and profaneness, and resolves not to tolerate, much less allow any of these in any part of his majesty's dominions, but to oppose himself thereto, and to endeavour the extirpation thereof to the utmost of his power; so doth he as a Christian exhort, and as a king require that all such of his subjects, who have stood in opposition to the solemn league and covenant and work of reformation, upon a pretence of kingly interest, or any other pretext whatsoever, to lay down their enmity against the cause and people of God, and to cease to prefer the interest of man to the interest of God; which hath been one of those things which hath occasioned many troubles and calamities in these kingdoms, and being insisted into, will be so far from establishing of the king's throne, that it will prove an idol of jealousy, to provoke unto wrath him who is King of kings, and Lord of lords. The king shall always esteem them best servants, and most loyal subjects, who serve him, and seek his greatness in a right line of subordination unto God; 'giving unto God the things that are God's, and unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's,' and resolveth not to love, or countenance any, who have so little conscience and piety, as to follow his interest with a prejudice to the gospel and the kingdom of Jesus Christ, which he looks not upon as duty, but as flattery, and driving of self-designs, under a pretence of maintaining royal authority and greatness.

Secondly, His majesty being convinced in conscience, of the exceeding great sinfulness and unlawfulness, of that treaty and peace made with the bloody Irish rebels, who treacherously shed the blood of so many of his faithful and loyal subjects in Ireland, and of allowing unto them the liberty of the popish religion; for the which he doth from his heart desire to be deeply humbled before the Lord; and likewise considering how many breaches have been upon their part, doth declare the same to be void, and that his majesty is absolved therefrom; being truly sorry that he should have sought unto so unlawful help for restoring of him to his throne, and resolving for the time to come, rather to choose affliction than sin. *Thirdly*, As his majesty did in the late treaty with his people in this kingdom, agree to recall and annul all commissions against any of his subjects, who did adhere to the covenant, and monarchical government in any of his kingdoms; so doth he now declare, that by commissioning of some persons by sea, against the people of England, he did not intend damage or injury to his oppressed and harmless subjects in that kingdom, who follow their trade of merchandise in their lawful callings, but only the opposing and suppressing of those who had usurped the government, and not only bar him from his just right, but also exercise an arbitrary power over his people, in those things which concern their persons, consciences and estates: and as since his com-

ing into Scotland, he hath given no commissions against any of his subjects in England or Ireland, so he doth hereby assure and declare, that he will give none to their prejudice or damage; and whatever shall be the wrongs of these usurpers, that he will be so far from avenging these upon any who are free thereof, by interrupting and stopping the liberty of trade and merchandise or otherwise, that he will seek their good, and to the utmost employ his royal power, that they may be protected and defended against the unjust violence of all men whatsoever. And albeit his majesty desireth to construct well of the intentions of those (in reference to his majesty) who have been active in counsel or arms against the covenant; yet being convinced that it doth conduce for the honour of God, the good of his cause, and his own honour and happiness, and for the peace and safety of these kingdoms, that such be not employed in places of power and trust, he doth declare that he will not employ, nor give commissions to any such until they have not only taken or renewed the covenant, but also have given sufficient evidences of their integrity, carriage and affection to the work of reformation, and shall be declared capable of trust, by the parliament of either kingdom respective: and his majesty upon the same grounds, doth hereby recall all commissions given to any such persons; conceiving all such persons will so much tender a good understanding betwixt him and his subjects; and the settling and pre-

serving a firm peace in these kingdoms, that they will not grudge nor repine at his majesty's resolutions and proceedings herein, much less upon discontent act any thing in a divided way unto the raising of new troubles; especially since upon their pious and good deportment, there is a regrefs left unto them in manner above expressed.

And as his majesty hath given satisfaction to the just and necessary desires of the kirk and kingdom of Scotland, so doth he hereby assure and declare, that he is no less willing and desirous to give satisfaction to the just and necessary desires of his good subjects in England and Ireland; and in token thereof, if the houses of parliament of England, sitting in freedom shall think fit to present unto him, the propositions of peace agreed upon by both kingdoms, he will not only accord to the same, and such alterations thereanent as the houses of parliament in regard of the constitution of affairs, and the good of his majesty and his kingdoms shall judge necessary, but do what is further necessary, for prosecuting the ends of the solemn league and covenant, especially in those things which concern the reformation of the church of England in doctrine, worship, discipline and government; that not only the directory of worship, the Confession of Faith and catechism, but also the propositions and directory for church government accorded upon by the synod of divines at Westminster may be settled, and that the church of England may enjoy the full

liberty and freedom of all assemblies and power of kirk-censures, and of all the ordinances of Jesus Christ according to the rule of his own word, and that whatsoever is commanded by the God of heaven, may be diligently done for the house of the God of heaven; and, whatever heretofore hath been the suggestions of some to him, to render his majesty jealous of his parliament, and of the servants of God: yet as he hath declared, that in Scotland, he will hearken to their counsel, and follow their advice, in those things that concern that kingdom and kirk; so doth he also declare his firm resolution to manage the government of the kingdom of England, by the advice of his parliament, consisting of an house of lords, and of an house of commons there; and in those things that concern religion, to prefer the counsels of the ministers of the gospel, to all other counsels whatsoever. And that all the world may see how much he tenders the safety of his people, and how precious their blood is in his sight, and how desirous he is to recover his crown and government in England, by peaceable means; as he doth esteem the service of those who first engaged in the covenant, and have since that time faithfully followed the ends thereof, to be duty to God, and loyalty to him; so is he willing, in regard of others, who have been involved in these late commotions in England, against religion and government, to pass an act of oblivion, excepting only some few in that nation, who

have been chief obstruēters of the work of reformation, and chief authors of the change of the government, and of the murder of his royal father. Provided, that these who are to have the benefit of this act, lay down arms, and return unto the obedience of their lawful sovereign.

The committee of estates of the kingdom, and General Assembly of the kirk of Scotland, having declared so fully in what concerns the sectaries, and the present designs, resolutions, and actings of their army, against the kingdom of Scotland: and the same committee and assembly having sufficiently laid open public dangers and duties, both upon the right hand and upon the left; it is not needful for his majesty to add any thing thereunto; except, that in those things he doth commend and approve them, and that he resolves to live and die with them, and his loyal subjects, in prosecution of the ends of the covenant.

And whereas that prevailing party in England, after all their strange usurpations, and insolent actings in that land, do not only keep his majesty from the government of that kingdom by force of arms, but also have now invaded the kingdom of Scotland, who have deserved better things at their hands, and against whom they have no just quarrel; his majesty doth therefore desire and expect, that all his good subjects in England, who are, and resolve to be faithful to God, and to their king, according to the covenant,

will lay hold upon such an opportunity, and use their utmost endeavours to promote the covenant, and all the ends thereof; and to recover and re-establish the ancient government of the kingdom of England, (under which for many generations, it did flourish in peace and plenty, at home, and in reputation abroad) and privileges of the parliament, and native and just liberty of the people. His majesty desires to assure himself, that there doth remain in these so much confidence of their duty to religion, their king and country, and so many sparkles of the ancient English valour, which shined so eminently in their noble ancestors, as will put them on to bestir themselves for the breaking the yoke of those mens oppressions from off their necks. Shall men of conscience and honour set religion, liberties and government at so low a rate, as not rather to undergo any hazard, before they be thus deprived of them? Will not all generous men count any death more tolerable, than to live in servitude all their days? And will not posterity blame those, who dare attempt nothing for themselves, and for their children, in so good a cause, in such an exigent? Whereas, if they gather themselves, and to take courage, putting on a resolution answerable to so noble and just an enterprize, they shall honour God, and gain themselves the reputation of pious men, worthy patriots, and loyal subjects, and be called *The repairers of the breach*, by the present and succeeding

generations; and they may certainly promise to themselves a blessing from God, upon so just and honourable undertaking for the Lord, and for this cause, for their own liberties, their native king and country, and the invaluable good and happiness of their posterity. Whatever hath formerly been his majesty's guiltiness before God, and the bad success that these have had, who owned his affairs, whilst he stood in opposition to the work of God; yet the state of the question being now altered, and his majesty having obtained mercy to be on God's side, and to prefer God's interest before his own: he hopes, that the Lord will be gracious, and countenance his own cause, in the hands of weak and sinful instruments, against all enemies whatsoever. This is all that can be said by his majesty at present, to those in England and Ireland, at such a distance; and as they shall acquit themselves at this time in the active discharge of their necessary duties, so shall they be accepted before God, endeared to his majesty, and their names had in remembrance throughout the world.

Given at our court at Dunfermline, the sixteenth day of August, 1650, and in the second year of our reign.

THE
C A U S E S

OF A

Solemn Fast and Humiliation to be kept by the King's majesty, and the whole Congregation of this Kirk, upon Thursday the 26th of December next, in this year 1650, mentioned page 441.

THE long opposition that has been made by the royal family to the work of God, and progress of the gospel, and persecution that has been by their authority, of many godly and faithful men, since the reformation began in this land.

That king James, after his swearing and subscribing the covenant, should so foully have fallen from the same, and contrary thereunto have altered the government of his church, brought in bishops, and many other ceremonies.

The persecution that was followed by him against many faithful ministers, for adhering to the covenant and liberties of the church, and testifying against the corruptions of the time.

His laying of a foundation for bringing in all the ceremonies of the church of England on this church, whence has followed so many sad inconveniences, as these years past have produced.

King Charles his entering upon that same course, and prosecuting that same design, whereby after many particular offences, it came at last to an arbitrary and violent obtruding of the Book of Common Prayer, and cannons upon this church.

His allaying and marrying with one of the popish religion, and his tolerating the mass, and exercise of these abominations, in view of the Lord's people, to the great prejudice of the reformed religion, and thus putting himself and his kingdoms under snares and wrath.

The great profanity of his court for many years, too much tolerated and countenanced by him in masks and sabbath-breakings, at last publicly allowed by him in many things, by the book of sports, &c.

His arbitrary government, whereby many of all sorts has been brought to suffering, without proceeding according to the laws of the kingdom.

His establishing the court of high commission, and authorizing them in many things destructive to the liberties of this church and kingdom.

His prosecuting by arms, being misled by evil counsel, a war against those who adhere to the covenant, and necessarily and lawfully

withstood the inbringing of these corruptions into this church, whereby he made himself guilty of much innocent blood of the Lord's people in these kingdoms.

The present king, his entering to tread the same steps;

1. By closing a treaty with the popish Irish rebels, who had shed so much blood, and granting them, not only their personal liberty, but also the free exercise of the popish religion; so that he might make use of them against his protestant subjects.

2. By his commissionating that excommunicate rebel James Graham to invade and ravage this kingdom, who were striving to be faithful to the cause, and to him, and to give out millions to sundry by sea for that end.

3. By his refusing for a time the just satisfaction that was desired by this church and kingdom.

4. His entertaining private correspondences with malignants and enemies of the cause, contrary to the covenant, whereby he was at last drawn to a public and scandalous deserting of the public judicatories of this kingdom, so contrary to his oath, treaty, declaration, and professions (whereupon followed many offences and inconveniences) and to join with malignants and perverse men, who were by his warrant encouraged to take arms at such a time, to the hazarding of the cause, and fostering of jealousies, and disturbing the peace of the kingdom.

These sins being sensibly laid before the Lord, he is with ardent prayers to be intreated to do away the controversy he has against the king, and his house for these transgressions, and that he may be graciously pleased to bless the king's person and government.



